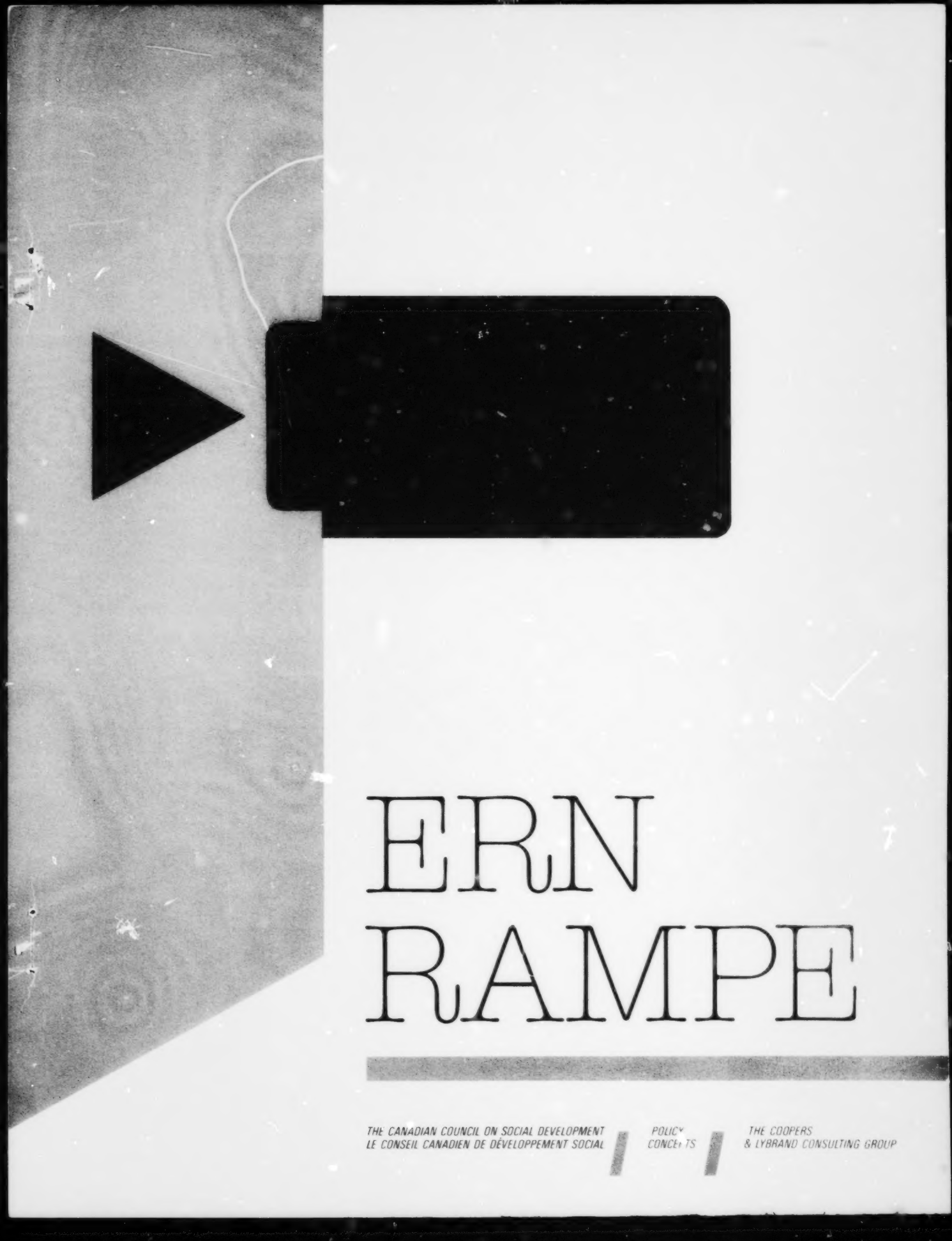


ERN RAMPE

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DE DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL

POLICY CONCEPTS

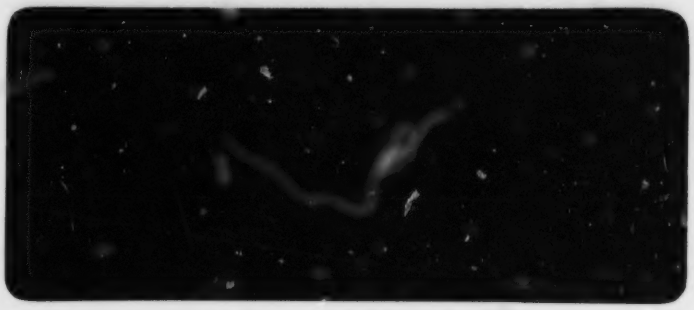
THE COOPERS & LYBRAND CONSULTING GROUP

Employability Resources Network

The Employability Resources Network (ERN) is a three-year demonstration project funded by Employment and Immigration Canada under the Innovations program.

ERN is the responsibility of three organizations: The Canadian Council on Social Development, The Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group, and The Norton Group.

ERN's purpose is to explore and evaluate methods for helping unemployed people get off social assistance and back into the job market, through employability programs currently under way across Canada.



ERN will select at least 10 to 15 demonstration projects for an in-depth evaluation of the different approaches used to help social assistance recipients and others re-enter the labour force. It will assess the projects' effectiveness for different groups, such as older unemployed workers, women, native people, disabled persons, visible minorities and youth.

ERN will establish a standardized framework for evaluating employability enhancement projects. The framework will provide useful information not only for government policy-makers, but also for business, social service and employment agencies, and program administrators.

ERN will develop an information resource centre. It will include an inventory of national and international employment projects, an evalution data base and a documentation library. A communications network will serve organizations and individuals in the employment enhancement field.

The Employability Resources Network,
55 Parkdale Avenue,
Ottawa K1Y 1E5. Tel: (613) 728-1879.
Fax: (613) 728-9387.
Strategic Management Committee: Keith Norton, The Norton Group; Terrance Hunsley, CCSD; J.P. Herzog, Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group
Contract Administration/Technical Support: Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group (613) 237-3702
Communications: CCSD (613) 728-1865 and Media Concepts Communications (416) 486-1800
Information Resources: CCSD
Demonstration Evaluation: Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group
Quebec Liaison: CCSD (514) 288-1687

Ressources pour l'amélioration des possibilités d'emploi

Le projet Ressources pour l'amélioration des possibilités d'emploi (RAMPE) est un projet témoin d'une durée de trois ans financé par Emploi et Immigration Canada dans le cadre du programme Innovations.

Trois organisations assument la responsabilité de RAMPE : le Conseil canadien de Développement social, Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group et Le Norton Group.

Le mandat de RAMPE est d'explorer et d'évaluer, dans le cadre de programmes d'amélioration des possibilitiés d'emploi ayant cours dans l'ensemble du Canada, différentes formules pouvant aider les chômeurs à se soustraire à l'aide sociale et à réintégrer le marché du travail.

RAMPE sélectionnera dix à quinze projets témoins pour évaluer minutieusement les différentes stratégies favorisant la réinsertion des assistés sociaux et d'autres personnes sur le marché du travail. Il appréciera l'efficacité des projets visant différents groupes tels que les chômeurs d'un certain âge, les femmes, les autochtones, les handicapés, les minorités visibles et les jeunes.

RAMPE élaborera un schéma d'évaluation destiné aux projets d'amélioration des débouchés. Ce schéma fournira des renseignements utiles non seulement aux décideurs politiques du gouvernement, mais aussi aux entreprises, aux organismes de services sociaux et d'emploi, et aux administrateurs de programmes.

RAMPE créera également un centre national de documentation. Celui-ci comprendra l'inventaire des programmes d'amélioration des perspectives d'emploi mis en place au Canada et à l'étranger, une base de données sur l'évaluation et un centre de documentation. Un réseau de communication sera à la disposition des organismes et des particuliers qui s'occupent de l'amélioration des perspectives d'emploi.

Ressources pour l'amélioration des possibilités d'emploi, 55, avenue Parkdale, Ottawa K1Y 1E5.
Tél.: (613) 728-1879.
Télécopieur: (613) 728-9387.
Comité de gestion stratégique: Keith Norton, Le Norton Group; Terrance Hunsley, CCDS; J.P. Herzog, Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group
Administration des contrats/support technique: Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group (613) 237-3702
Communications: CCDS (613) 728-1865 et Media Concepts Communications (416) 486-1800
Ressources documentaires: CCDS
Évaluation des projets témoins: Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group
Liaison au Québec: CCDS (514) 288-1687

91-03627/

EMPLOYABILITY RESOURCES NETWORK

REPORT ON THE EVALUATION STUDY

OF THE SOBEYS TRAINING PROJECT

Final Report
November, 1990

Copyright © 1990 by the Employability Resources Network. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Employability Resources Network.

Additional copies are available for $5.00 each and may be obtained by writing to the Employability Resources Network.

Published 1990.
Employability Resources Network
55 Parkdale Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1Y 1E5
Tel.: (613) 728-1879. Fax: (613) 728-9387

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		i
1.	**INTRODUCTION**	1
	Purpose of the Study	1
	Evaluation Objectives	1
	Structure of the Report	3
	Acknowledgements	3
2.	**BACKGROUND**	4
	Mission Statement of Employability Resources Network (ERN)	4
	Objectives of ERN	4
	Benefits of ERN	4
	Overview of Sobeys Training Project - Operations and Activities	5
3.	**STUDY DESIGN**	8
	Telephone Survey of Participants	8
	In-person Interviews	8
	Measuring Project Success	9
4.	**FACTS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**	10
	Issue 1: Did the Sobeys project assist participant's in: . obtaining employment; and . maintaining employment?	10
	Issue 2: Did the Sobeys training project end/reduce the participant's dependence on social assistance?	13
	Issue 3: Did the Project strengthen the participant's sense of employment readiness?	14

TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont'd)

Issue 4: Did the Sobeys training project improve the participant's financial situation? 15

Issue 5: What were the costs of the program compared to social assistance 17

Issue 6: What interventions contribute most to increasing employability? 19

Qualitative Findings 21
Strengths of the Sobeys Training Project 21
Areas for Improvement 23
Summary of Observations 24

5. RECOMMENDATIONS **26**

6. CONCLUSION **28**

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I:
PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

APPENDIX II:
METHODOLOGY OUTLINE

APPENDIX III:
TELEPHONE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

Exhibit 1: **What Works for Whom**

Sobeys Training Project, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Clientele: Social Assistance Recipients

Intervention	Intended Output	Output (Outcome of intervention)	Impact (Leads to)	Effect (Result)	Comments
Specific skills training (meat cutting, deli and bakery operations)	To train participants in specified skills so as to meet identified by Sobeys Inc.	Participants trained in one of: meat cutting, deli	Employment offers from Sobeys Inc. participants.	All participants who passed the training program offers by Sobeys.	Participants see training program as offering them real alternative to social assistance a trade, a future and security.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Conclusions

The Sobeys Training Project is a demonstrated success in enhancing the employability of the individuals who participate. This goal has been accomplished by providing participants with trades training for which specific labour shortages have been identified. Through the training project not only has the individual's employability been enhanced, but also his/her ability to retain employment. The evaluation has also found that the Sobeys Training Project has had a direct impact on the reduction of social assistance received by participants after the training project compared to immediately prior to their involvement, and that participants generally felt that they were better off because of their involvement in the project.

It is our assessment that the key strength of the Sobeys Training Project is the committed involvement of the private sector (in this instance, Sobeys Inc. in cooperation with Lifestyles Management) to employment training in areas where labour shortages exist. The opportunity afforded the individual on social assistance is a real alternative to assistance and one that, with a commitment to hard work and positive attitudes, can lead to advancement and security within the company. An associated strength is that the project provides participants with trades training and the opportunity to make a career of that trade. Exhibit 1, on the opposite page, highlights the process, impacts and effects of the project.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Sobeys Training Project is an example of a private sector training program in which training shortages have been identified (specifically in the meat cutting, deli and bakery operations) and training programs developed to meet those needs. Social assistance recipients fill the training positions, and if successful in the training, graduate into employment with Sobeys Inc. A program logic model describing the objectives, activities, outputs and impacts of the Sobeys Training Project was developed during the evaluation assessment. The logic model, which can be found in Appendix I, provides a description of the program at a glance.

Exhibit 2: Evaluation Issues and Conclusions

	Issues	Conclusions Suggested by the Evaluation
1.	Did the Program assist the participants in obtaining employment; or maintaining employment?	Yes, 66% were employed at Sobeys. Another 13% found employment outside the organization. Two thirds were employed from 6 to 18 months and 76% continued in their first job.
2.	Did the Program end or reduce social assistance?	Yes, the program reduced dependence on social assistance. The monthly social assistance payment decreased from $591.14 to $160.94 after the project for a difference of $460.20.
3.	Did the Program strengthen the participants' personal sense of employment readiness?	Yes
4.	Did the Program improve the participants' financial situation?	Yes, mean income after the project was $12,291 compared to $10,535 before Thirteen respondents reported that they felt financially better off at the time of the survey than before the project.
5.	What were the costs of the Program compared to social assistance?	The per capita costs of each session is estimated to be 7,791.43. In addition, 9 months of social assistance savings offset the cost of one training session (6 months).
6.	What interventions contributed most to increasing employability?	In addition to training which met requirements for employment, employed participants view the physical activity program and stress management as helpful. Unemployed participants listed presentation skills, resumé preparation and nutrition education as most helpful.

Clientele

The social assistance referrals for the Sobeys Training Project come through two other SARS projects operating in the region, the Halifax County Employment Resource Centre and the Halifax City Employment Support Centre. A screening mechanism has been designed with input from the Sobeys personnel manager to ensure that basic qualifications are met; no back disorders, arthritis or problems with standing for extended periods. Other preferred qualifications include the individual's public appearance and a grade 10 reading level. As most referrals have been at a lower reading level however, the classroom training has been redesigned to take this into consideration. The project is open to both males and females and there is no restriction on the basis of age or any criteria other than those specified above. Essentially, Sobeys Training Project participants are the able bodied unemployed.

At the time of the evaluation, three training sessions had been completed with a total intake of 42 participants. Early in the training however 4 participants relocated so in effect the number of total participants was 38.

Operation

The training project is made up of two components and is 26 weeks in duration. The first component consists of classroom training and runs for 4 weeks, in addition to one day a month during the on-site training. Modules covered in the classroom components are implemented by the project coordinator for the project, a private consultant in lifestyles training. They include life skills training in communications skills, resume writing and job search techniques, basic work skills, self-esteem and confidence building; occupational safety issues such as proper lifting techniques and general back care; and wellness issues including physical fitness, smoking cessation, nutrition, conflict management and stress management.

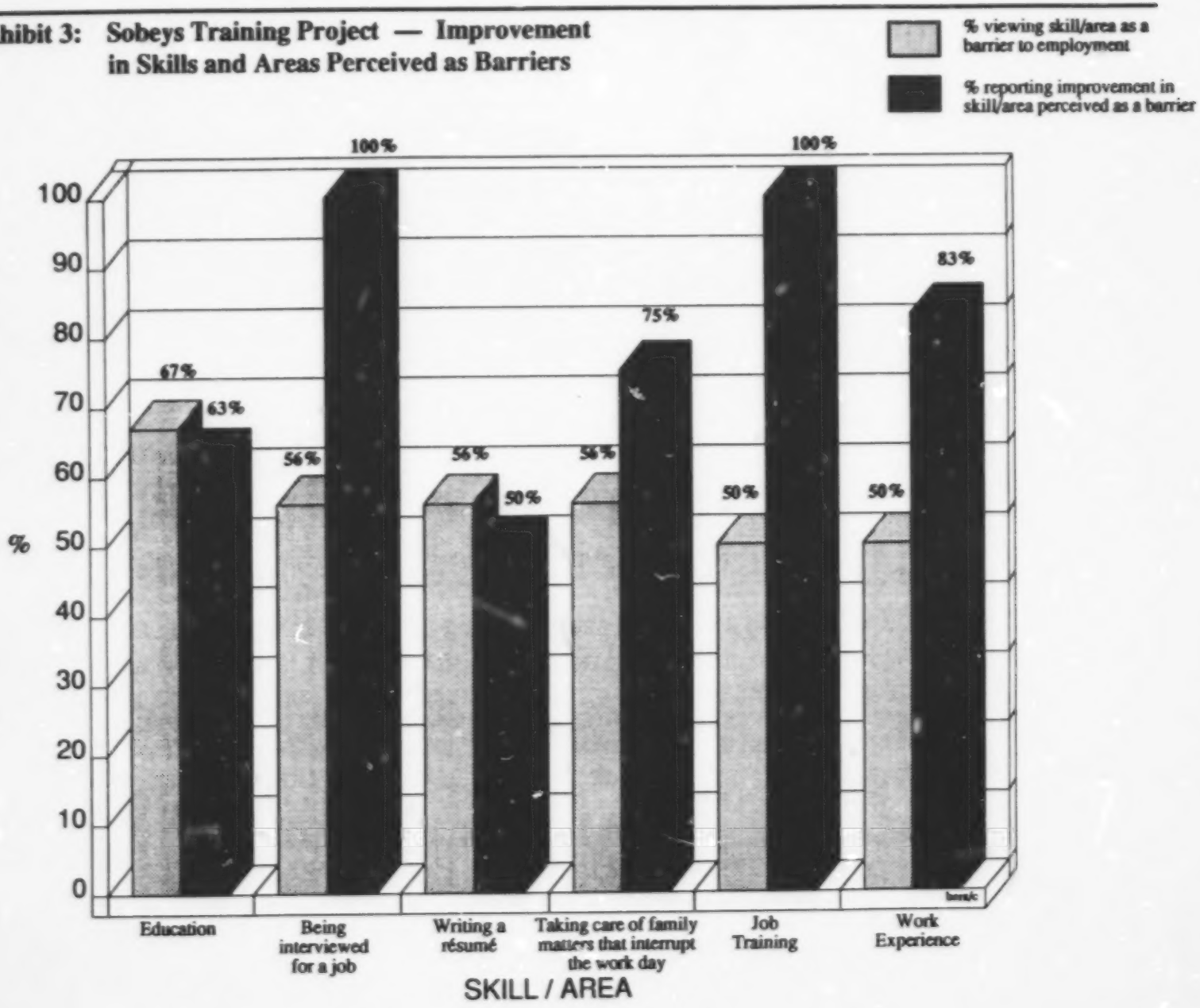
The second component runs for 19 weeks and consists of on-site specific trades training (meat cutting, deli and bakery). These modules were developed by Sobeys in-house specialists and implemented in Sobeys stores by supervisory staff.

Issues and Findings

Six issues were examined in evaluating the Sobeys Training Project. They are listed, along with the conclusions suggested by the data collected, in Exhibit 2, on the opposite page:

1. The Sobeys Training Project was successful in training and placing 79% of participants in positions of employment. Of these participants, 66% found employment with the Sobeys organization and 13% outside the organization. Seventy-six percent continued in their first job, and two-

Exhibit 3: Sobeys Training Project — Improvement in Skills and Areas Perceived as Barriers



thirds were employed from 6 to 18 months.

2. The Sobeys project was successful in reducing the amount of social assistance received by most employed participants. The amount of social assistance payments decreased $430.20 from an average of $591.14 per month before the project to $160.94 after the project. The amount of social assistance will be further reduced, and should be completely replaced by wage income, when the participants are brought on full-time with Sobeys. In the interim, however, all employed participants, benefit from the organization's pension and health care plans after one year of employment. We can assume then that any medical costs are borne by the employer rather than the social assistance system.

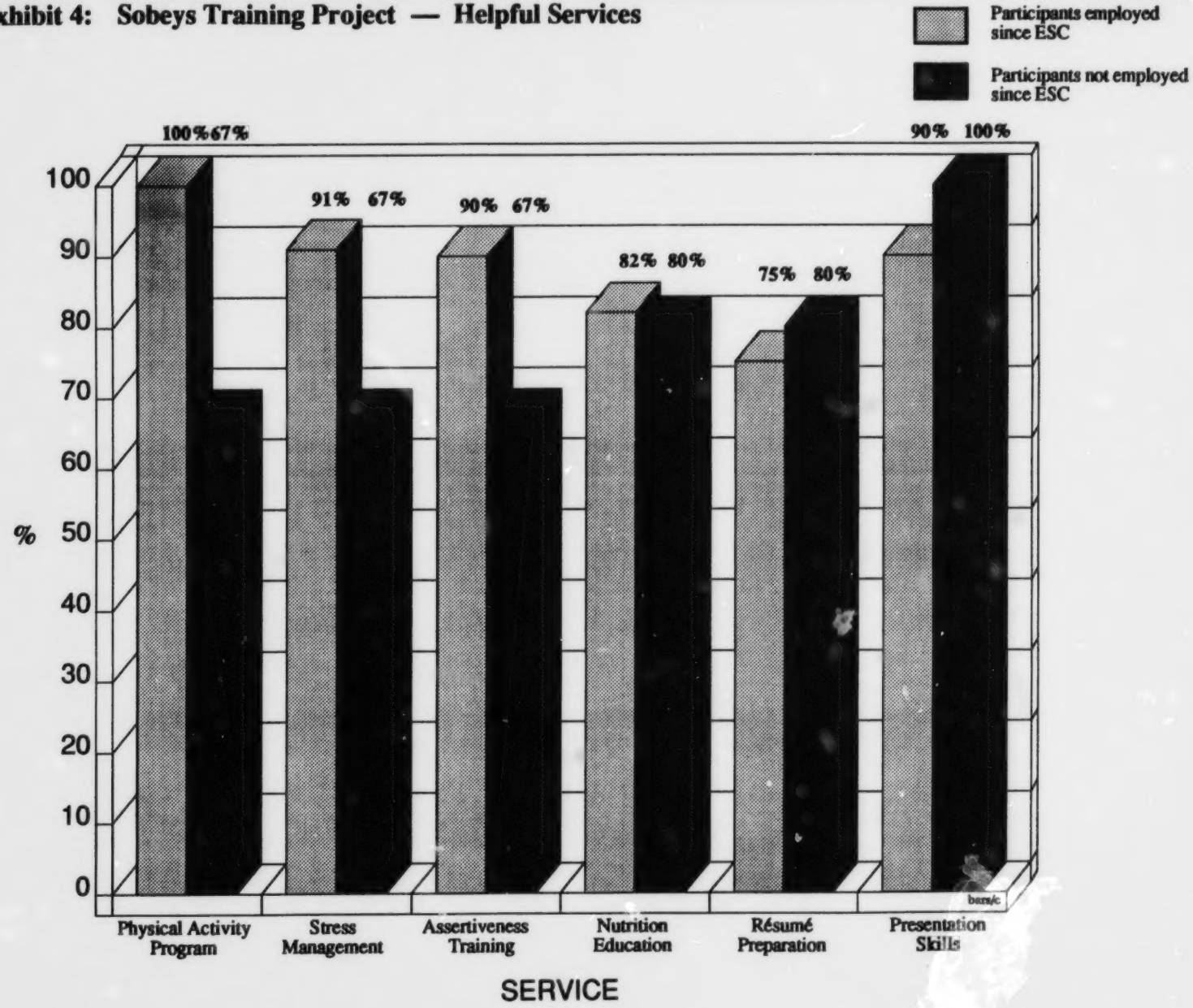
3. Almost 100% of participants (including those who were made job offers as well as those who were not) reported a greatly improved sense of employment readiness and attributed this directly to the specific trades training offered by the Sobeys Training Project. An additional training area reported by participants as adding to their employment readiness was the acquisition of job interview skills. Exhibit 3, on the opposite page, lists the five main areas viewed as barriers to employment and the percentage of participants who reported improvement with respect to this barrier. The areas listed are the more generic.

4. The findings indicate that the mean income level at the time of the survey was $12,291 compared to $10,535 before the project. Thirteen respondents reported they felt financially better off before their involvement. Income did drop slightly to $9,874 in the three months after the project. The costs of employment versus unemployment (transportation, daycare, clothing) are higher but the fact that wages have replaced assistance as the primary source of income is a positive psychological factor for participants. The availability of a pension plan and health care package and the knowledge that full-time hours will be available to them also contributes to this apparent contradiction.

5. The per capita cost of a training session is $7,791.43. The time expected to recoup the cost of a training session from social assistance savings was 9 months with a monthly reduction in social assistance payment of $430.20.

6. As in Issue 3 above, almost 100% of participants who found employment listed as helpful services those which were a direct or indirect requirement for employment (i.e. meat, deli and bakery operations training, St. John's Ambulance training and back care education). In addition, stress management and the physical activity program were viewed as helpful by

Exhibit 4: Sobeys Training Project — Helpful Services



this group. Participants who were not employed listed presentation skills (to enhance public relations skills), resume preparation and nutrition education as helpful. Smoking education and referrals to academic upgrading were viewed as least helpful by all participants. Exhibit 4 lists the services, of a more generic type, viewed as helpful by participants.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are intended as suggestions, for enhancing the project. We recognize that not all our suggestions are under the direct control of project management. Consideration may be given to including some or all of these recommendations in future funding proposals. With this in mind, we recommend:

Federal/Provincial Governments

1. The SARS program should continue to encourage private sector participation in the identification, establishment and implementation of training programs. This recommendation is based on the high success rate (79% of participants placed in ongoing employment) of the Sobeys Training Project. In areas facing high unemployment rates, in particular, it is the private sector that is in the best position to identify labour shortages and therefore real employment opportunities.

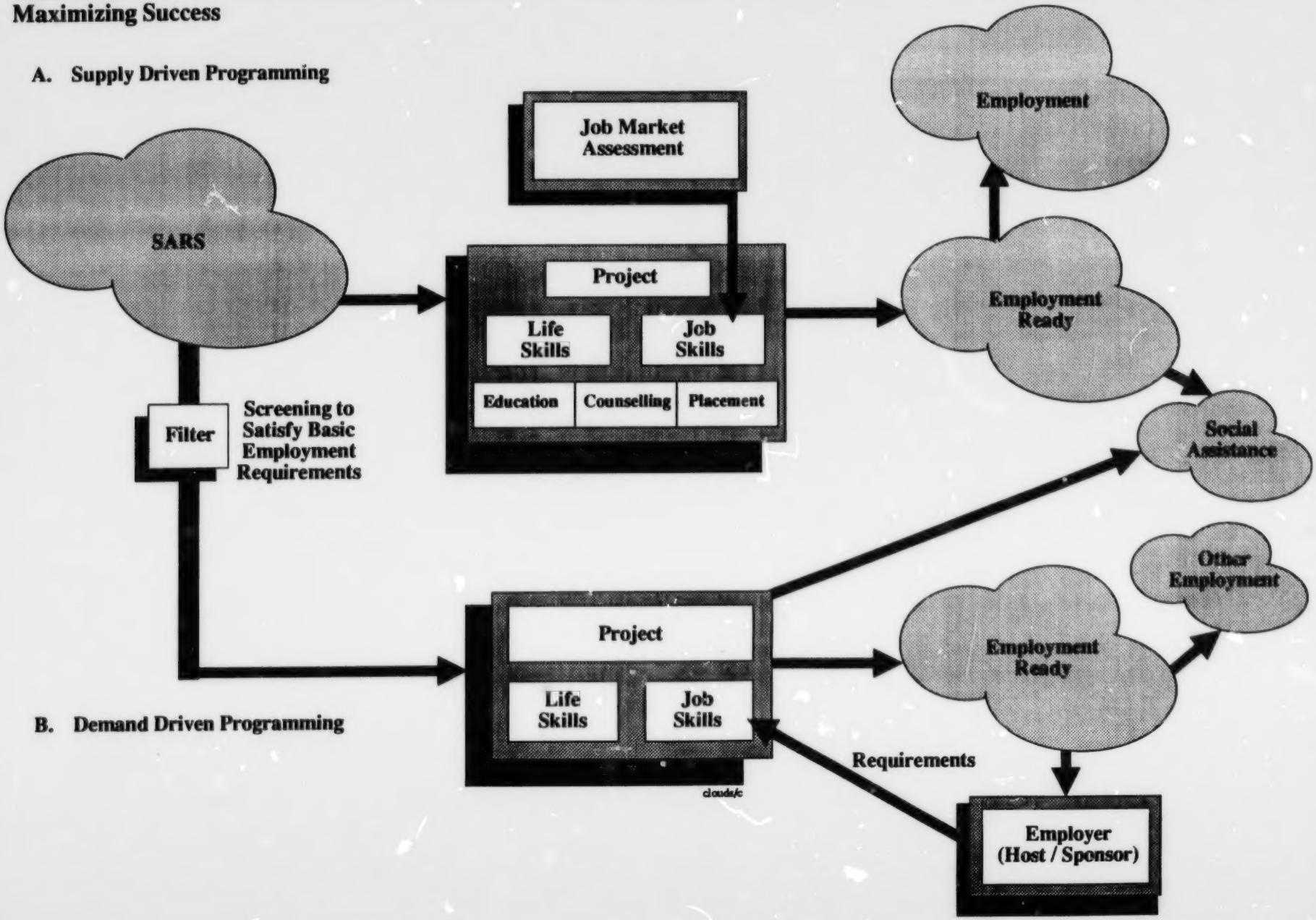
2. In future private sector training projects, the process whereby training components are developed jointly by professional outside trainers and in-house trainers specific to the industry, should be encouraged. This recommendation is based on the fact that the training meets the needs of the employer and is transferable to other employers in the same industry.

Project Designers/Project Management

3. Future private sector training projects should include an adequate budget to allow for appropriate monitoring of trainees while training on-site. This information is not collected at present and would be useful to project management to undertake longer-term follow-up directed at planning. In the short-term, it would enable project management to address problems immediately that certain participants may be having rather than resulting in the termination of training.

4. In addition, provision should be made for counselling or similar support for participants of private sector training projects. That is, if a participant while on training is identified in need of counselling, provisions should be made for transition to counselling and back to training once the barrier is addressed. At present, this service is not available and participants facing difficulties that may be quickly addressed have no choice but to leave the project.

Maximizing Success



Specifically for this Project

5. More emphasis on assertiveness training and building self-esteem should be built into the classroom training component. This recommendation is based on observations made by Sobeys supervisory staff of the trainees interacting on-site with customers and Sobeys management. This training would result in better customer relation skills for trainees, and therefore improve their job performance.

6. For future training projects, the automatic sick day per month should be excluded. Project management reported that this privilege is "abused" by participants. This recommendation is made to bring the training environment in line with the employment environment.

7. Four participants' involvement with the project was terminated as a result of "attitude problems". Careful consideration should be given to the reasons why these participants were unable to complete the project. In particular, we recommend that project management and Sobeys Inc. examine the screening process which is currently in place to determine whether additional criteria would result in a more effective selection of candidates. This process, if implemented on a regular basis, will continue to refine the selection criteria and ensure selection of candidates with a high potential for success.

Lessons Learned

Finally, this evaluation was not conducted in isolation, but as part of a series of evaluations under the auspices of the Employability Resources Network (ERN). As such, we have attempted to answer the question "What works for whom?", in order to add to a broader base of knowledge being acquired regarding employability enhancement projects.

Most employability enhancement projects are supply driven in that a large pool of unemployed individuals exists and a project is designed to make these participants employment ready. Typically, the project includes two general categories of training, life skills and job skills. The job skills training tends to be generic in nature.

In contrast, projects involving the private sector are demand or market driven. The private sector employer individually, or with the initiative of a public agency, identifies existing labour shortages and a training project is developed to meet these needs. Once again, skills training includes life skills but the job skills component is designed to meet requirements of employment with the training host and sponsor and potential employer. Exhibit 5, on the opposite page, depicts these two types of projects.

We have found that demand driven programming, where the employer acts as host and sponsor to training, maximizes the success of the projects. This type of programming does so by providing specific training in an area where a labour shortage exists, as opposed to supply driven programming which offers more generic training not directed at meeting an identified need of the employment community.

Demand driven projects offer real alternatives to more traditional projects particularly in areas experiencing unusually high unemployment rates. In addition, they often offer the participant an opportunity to learn a transferable skill at wages above the provincial minimum. The employer can meet short and long-term needs and train employees in their own tradition, thereby gaining a return on the investments in training. Finally, with employers acting as sponsors and hosts whole for the job-specific training, reliance on public monies is reduced.

It is obvious that if public agencies can act as catalysts for such programs, with employers acting as training hosts and sponsors, projects of this type would meet the needs of the participant, employer, and government more so than supply-driven projects.

1.
INTRODUCTION

The Sobeys Training Project is a 26 week "employment readiness" program, which has been evaluated under the auspices of the Employability Resources Network (ERN) Initiative. This report, prepared by The Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group which also conducted the evaluation assessment, presents the results of the evaluation study of the Sobeys Training Project.

Purpose of the Study

An evaluation assessment of the Sobeys Training Project was completed in December 1989.

Consistent with The Coopers & Lybrand Consulting Group (CLCG) and ERN approach to carrying out evaluation activities, this assessment provided the basis for the evaluation study which was conducted between February and April, 1990.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate what interventions aimed at enhancing employability work best for particular types (e.g. the able bodied unemployed) of participants. Six evaluation issues were examined to answer this question.

Evaluation Objectives

Pursuant to the Evaluation Assessment and a decision by the ERN Evaluation Steering Committee, the issues that were addressed in the evaluation study (together with anticipated quality of data) are contained in Exhibit 1 below.

Exhibit 1:

COVERAGE OF ISSUES
FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE
SOBEYS PROJECT

ISSUES	DATA COVERAGE
1. Did the project assist the participants in: - obtaining employment - maintaining employment	H
2. Did the project end/reduce the participants' dependence on social assistance?	H
3. Did the project strengthen the participants' personal sense of employment readiness?	H
4. Did the project improve the participants' financial situation?	H
5. What were the costs of the program compared to social assistance?	L
6. What interventions contribute most to increasing employability?	H

Coverage:
H = High
M = Medium
L = Low

More explicit details concerning the foregoing issues with accompanying research questions, indicators and data sources are contained in Appendix II to this report. A Technical Appendix, under separate cover, includes statistical tables.

Structure of the Report

This report is structured in the following manner:

- **Background**
  - Mission statement, objectives and benefits of ERN initiative.
  - Sobeys Training Project objectives and a brief description of the Sobeys Training Project operations/activities.
- **Study Design**
  - Describes how the data for the evaluation study research were collected and analyzed.
- **Facts, Findings and Conclusions**
  - Outlines for each evaluation issue and research question the salient facts, findings and conclusions reached.
- **Recommendations**
  - Outlines the recommendations arising from our facts, findings and conclusions.
- **Conclusion**
  - Provides an overall conclusion to the study.

Appendix III supplies the survey questionnaire, and interview guides used during this evaluation.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Ms Carol Madden and Ms. Anna Pierce of Lifestyle Management and coordinators of the Sobeys project. Ms. Madden was helpful in providing an overview of the project while Ms. Pierce provided follow-up employment information. We would like to thank Mr. Tim Perry, personnel manager with Sobeys Inc., for his assistance in giving the evaluators Sobeys' perspective of the training project. In addition, we would like to thank all the Sobeys staff and project participants in responding to our questions during interviews and/or the telephone survey.

2.
BACKGROUND

Mission Statement of Employability Resources Network (ERN)

The Employability Resources Network (ERN) was undertaken to identify and promote effective ways of helping employment disadvantaged persons return to active participation in the labour market.

Objectives of ERN

The objectives of ERN are the following:

- To determine, through a comprehensive evaluation of a variety of initiatives, what approaches to enhancing the employability of disadvantaged workers, work best for whom.

- To demonstrate and test, using financial and technical assistance, approaches that are vital to enhancing the employability of disadvantaged workers.

- To develop and maintain a central information clearinghouse of employability enhancement techniques and materials. Contained in the clearinghouse are descriptions of Canadian and international projects and programs, contact people, evaluations and bibliographies.

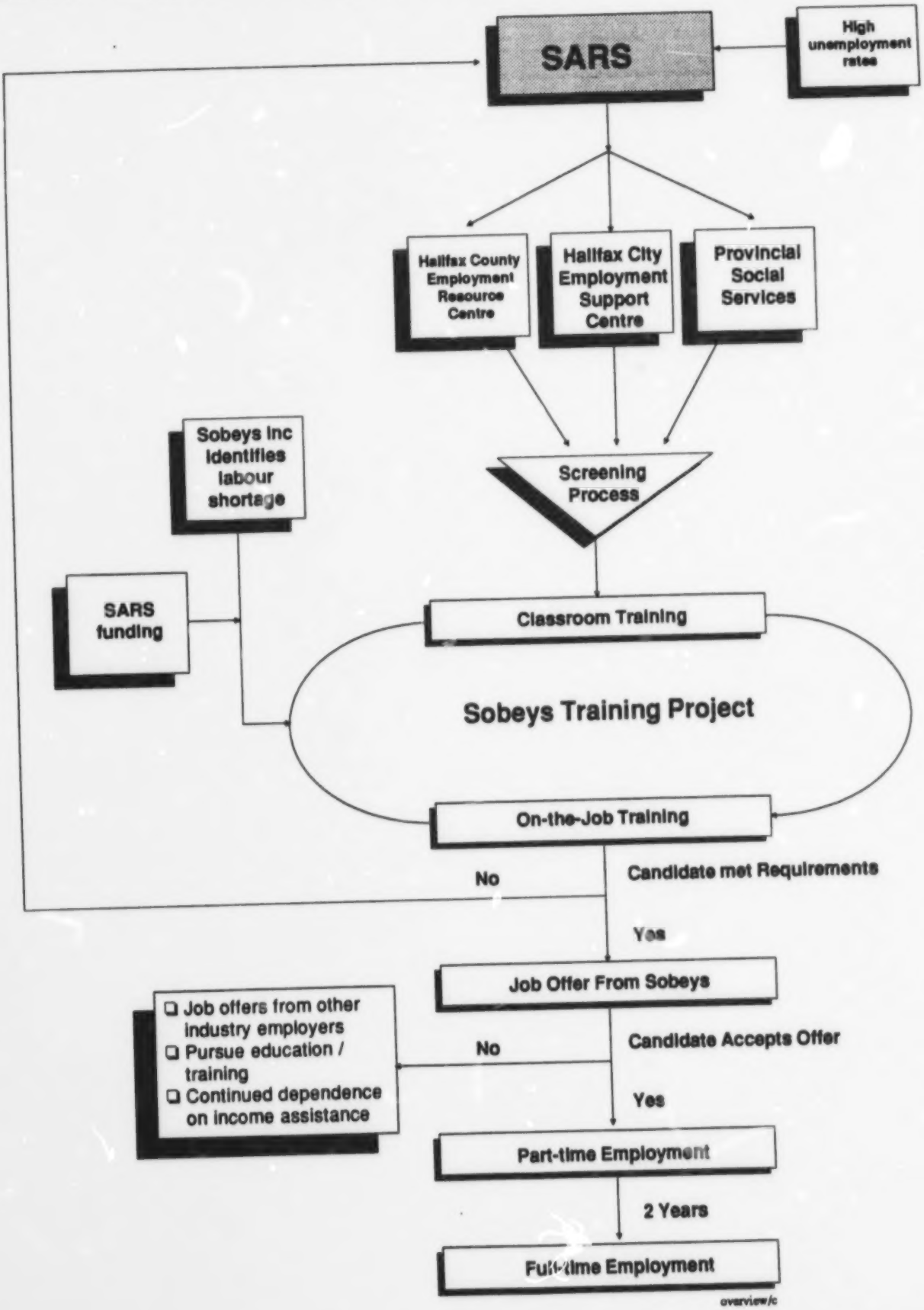
- To synthesize recent experience and recommend to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (funder) and other governments, effective approaches for enhancing the employability of disadvantaged workers.

Benefits of ERN

ERN has been designed to provide a "return" in the form of information and assistance to key stakeholders. They include Employment and Immigration Canada, other labour market or social service departments, projects being evaluated and demonstration projects, as well as communities, groups and individuals working or interested in the training and human resource development areas.

- Projects being evaluated will benefit from the objective examination of their services and outcomes for participants. Where appropriate,

Exhibit 2 — Overview of Sobeys Training Project



suggestions for alternate approaches or changes will be made.

- Senior governments will receive a synthesis of findings from evaluations, literature review and contacts with the employment community that will help in policy formulation and program development.

- Interested parties will also have access to a national clearinghouse of information on employment projects, programs, contact persons, and evaluations that will help in preparing funding submissions and in improving the quality of their services.

- Selected demonstration projects will be assisted to test innovative approaches.

Overview of Sobeys Training Project - Operations and Activities

The Sobeys Project is an example of a private sector training program established and funded through the Social Assistance Recipient Program (SARS). The program model is employer driven with the private sector identifying skill shortages and designing training programs addressed to meet those skill shortages. Social assistance recipients fill the training positions and, if successful, 'graduate' into employment.

Projects designed for the private sector skills training program are established on a modified basis of the entry/re-entry program of the Canadian Job Strategy. There are two major distinguishing features of the SARS training program; trainees receive wages instead of training allowances, and participating employers are expected to link their training directly to employment.

Sobeys management recognized in the program an opportunity to fill a number of skill shortages that they were facing as their company expanded their presence in the province; specifically in the meat cutting, deli and bakery operations.

To date, three separate training programs have been held under the Sobeys Project. The first began in July 1988; the second in January 1989 and the third in July 1989. A fourth is expected to start in 1990. The programs are 26 weeks in duration and consist of a combination of classroom training in lifestyles and on-the-job training in specific skills. The classroom training is located at the YWCA in Halifax and the on-the-job experience is provided on-site at 15 Sobeys stores. Exhibit 2, on the opposite page, provides a diagrammatic view of the Training Project.

Referrals for the Sobeys Project are social assistance recipients who come through two other SARS projects operating in the region, the Halifax City Employment Support Centre and the Halifax County Employment Resource Centre, as well as from Provincial Social Services. These referrals are initially screened by the project coordinator and then passed on to the Sobeys personnel manager for the final screening and

selection. Essentially, the able-bodied unemployed are eligible for participation. Although a grade 10 reading level is preferred, this is not a strict requirement.

During the initial implementation of the program, the lifestyles training component was allotted 4 weeks in the classroom and one day each month of the on-the-job training for a total of 5 weeks of the 26. This time was increased to 8 weeks in the second implementation (7 weeks plus one day a month for the remaining months) as it was recognized that the referrals required more intensive training in order to better prepare them for their on-the-job experience.

Modules covered in the lifestyles training include lifeskills training in communications skills, resume writing and job search techniques, basic work skills, self-esteem and confidence building; occupational safety issues such as proper lifting techniques and general back care; and wellness issues including physical fitness, smoking cessation, nutrition, conflict management and stress management. These modules were developed in consultation with experts in each of the fields covered and presented by the project coordinator, a private consultant in lifestyles training. Speakers are brought in to supplement topics.

Candidates are also made aware of employer expectations and have an opportunity to discuss their expectations prior to entering the workplace through a visit by the Sobeys personnel manager to the classroom. During a second visit the personnel manager is accompanied by the training specialist to further discuss job related expectations.

The modules in specific skills training areas (bakery, meat cutting and deli) were prepared by Sobeys in-house specialists and provided to the relevant department heads as a basis for the on-the-job training. Candidates receive this training from the relevant department heads over a 19 week period in an on-the-job setting.

During their 26 week training period, candidates receive wages of $5.50 an hour based on a 40 hour work week. In addition, all candidates receive monthly bus passes for the duration of the training project. Once hired, candidates are paid wages of $6.06 to start. After 360 hours of work, wages are reviewed. Part-time employees can only increase their wages to $8.73 an hour (the top part-time rate). If they are promoted to full-time then candidates can receive up to $10 an hour depending on their level.

The candidates' pay scale is equal to that of other Sobeys employees. The only difference between the Sobeys employee and a candidate is that program requirements call for a 40 hour work week while on-the-job training. This is higher than Sobeys 32 hour work week for most employees and is in effect only for the duration of the training program. The larger work is simply a result of the program planning. Once hired, hours would not usually exceed the 32 hour.

Exhibit 2, opposite page 5, outlines the participant's progression through the project.

3.
STUDY DESIGN

The study design consisted of multiple lines of evidence including:

- a telephone survey of participants;
- in-person interviews held with participants; and
- interviews conducted with Sobeys management/supervisory staff representing the deli, meat and bakery training areas.

Telephone Survey of Participants

The issues for evaluation were not directly addressed by data collected by the Sobeys Training Project management. At the time of the evaluation project management maintained only participants' names, telephone numbers and addresses. Accordingly, a major methodology tool for this evaluation was a telephone survey of all participants.

Participants from all sessions of the training project beginning in July, 1988 through July, 1989 were eligible for interviews by telephone. By including in the survey graduates from all three training projects, the evaluation was able to collect information so that longer term results of the project could be assessed (i.e. graduates who had exited the project from 2 months up to one year). Over the three training intakes a total of 42 participants were initially registered. Early in the project four participants relocated, leaving a total of 38 participants.

When conducting the survey, telephone numbers were available for 31 of 38 participants. The interviewers were instructed to call back at least five times and to trace any telephone numbers that were no longer correct or available. Eighteen participants were contacted and consented to a telephone interview.

In order to collect information (e.g. marital status, number of children) that was not available from project management, a supplementary telephone survey was subsequently carried out. Seventeen respondents agreed to provide this additional information.

In-person Interviews

In order to obtain insight into the impact of the training project on the individual trainees' quality of life, personal interviews were conducted with six participants. In addition, seven interviews were held with Sobeys

management staff to get their perspective on the project's strengths and weaknesses as a training mechanism.

Measuring Project Success

The key indicator used to measure the performance of the Sobeys project is the number of participants who are employed immediately upon project completion. The indicator was formulated during the assessment by the evaluators. The funders expect that close to 100% of successful participants, (i.e. participants who pass all the training requirements) will receive offers of employment from Sobeys. We accepted these indicators as an appropriate measure of success for this evaluation.

4.
FACTS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings and Conclusions

This section presents our findings and conclusions with respect to each of the six evaluation issues. These issues were established during the evaluation assessment. Appendix II outlines each issue and its associated research questions, indicators and data collection instruments.

ISSUE 1

Did the Sobeys Training Project assist participants in:

- **obtaining employment; and**
- **maintaining employment?**

Conclusion

The Sobeys Training Project was successful in training and placing 66%(25) of participants in positions of employment with Sobeys. Another 13% found employment outside the Sobeys organization, two in the retail food industry. Seventy-six percent of participants continued in their first job, with two thirds employed for a period ranging from 1/2 to 1 1/2 years indicating a stabilization in the employment pattern of participants. Finally, project success is linked to the fact that the project is demand driven (i.e. designed to meet a specific labour shortage).

Issue Focus

This issue addresses the primary goal of all employability enhancement projects, that is whether a participant's employment potential is improved. For this particular project, "employment potential" can be measured by examining whether participants exhibit a stronger employment history after participation in the Sobeys Training Project.

When evaluating this issue we considered what constitutes a "success". For the Sobeys Training Project, an offer of employment by the Sobeys organization is the appropriate yardstick. Typically, an individual hired at the entry level is put on part-time employment. This is the case with the food industry in general and is also the case for graduates of the training project. This part-time employment can involve as many as 38 to 40 hours a week, and may even exceed 40 hours during the busy seasons. During the less busy seasons (January, February and March) hours are cut back to the high 20's or low 30's. The length of time an individual is employed part-

time can vary depending on the store but can be up to 2 years.

In addition, mobility within the organization is rapid for employees with commitment and who demonstrate initiative and a willingness to work. For example, 5 graduates of the project have already been identified as having management potential and are being groomed for future supervisory positions. After one year with the company, employees (part-time and full-time) can pay into the company's medical and pension plans offering individuals a security that, prior to their involvement with the training project, would have been inconceivable. Further, graduates of the training project start off at an hourly wage of $6.06, the equivalent of an employee with one year of experience. By the end of the graduate's first year of employment, their wage will be at $8.73 an hour, nearly double the Province's minimum wage ($4.50 an hour). Therefore, in this instance, we considered part-time employment a success.

Findings

How many participants subsequently found work?

Prior to entering the Sobeys Training Project, all participants were recipients of social assistance. Data provided on the total number of actual participants (38) in the three training intakes by project administrators, indicate that 79% of participants were employed after the project. Sixty-six percent (25 cases) found employment with the Sobeys organization and 13% (5 cases) found employment outside the organization. Of these five participants, two were offered employment with Sobeys but accepted employment elsewhere (Superstore, Ben's Bakery) at a higher wage. The remaining three found employment with Molly Maid, Canada Post and a masonry company.

Of the remaining 21% (8 cases); one participant left the project to go back to school, one left on Workers' Compensation, four participants' involvement was terminated during the training due to attitude problems and the remaining two completed the training but were not offered employment. Interviews with project management indicate that the four participants who were let go were not job ready in terms of self-confidence and their ability to assume responsibility. It was suggested that a self-esteem component to the training may have been beneficial to these participants.

Overall then, 32 participants completed the training requirements. Of these, 27 received offers of employment and 25 accepted these offers. Therefore, 78% (25 of 32) participants who met training requirements were employed at Sobeys to meet training shortages, the objective of the project. An interesting question for follow-up by project management, and relating to the success of the project, is the number of participants who went on to full-time employment with Sobeys Inc..

How many successful participants maintained employment?
Is there a change in employment pattern for successful patterns?

These questions were addressed simultaneously.

An significant finding is that since their involvement with the Sobeys project, 76% (29 cases) of participants have continued in their first job, with one participant continuing in a second job. None of the participants employed after the project held three or more jobs.

Although the Sobeys related employment is of a part-time nature, it is considered permanent part-time and will likely result in full-time employment if there is a requirement at the store level and the individual has demonstrated his or her ability. In addition, the part-time employee has the option to pay into the company's benefit package including a pension and medical plan after one year with Sobeys. Since the first intake was July 1988, the first two year period is approaching. Project management may wish to determine the number of participants employed full time at this point.

Project management indicated that two thirds of these participants have been employed for one-half to one and one half years indicating that the training received has met both employers' and employees' expectations. The project was successful in enabling participants to maintain employment. In addition, these findings indicate that the employment pattern of these participants has stabilized.

Is the program success rate higher than in a comparable group?

We were not aware of a similar project which would provide a basis for comparison of the relative success of the Sobeys Training Project. We did identify three key factors linked to the success of the project: the selection and screening process; the existence of labour shortages; and the commitment by Sobeys to fill these shortages.

The first factor related to the project's success is the selection and screening process established for the project. Candidates are screened out who cannot meet the physical requirements of the job due to back disorders, arthritis, or problems with standing for extended periods. While preferred qualifications include a grade 10 reading level, most referrals have been found to have a much lower level and the classroom training has been re-designed accordingly. An individual's public appearance and demeanour are also taken into consideration during the screening process. As a result, selected participants are in essence the "cream" of social assistance recipients who meet training requirements in that the barriers to employment they face are "fixable" and not multiple. It should be noted, however, that 4 participants' involvement was terminated as a result of "attitude problems", pointing to a need to evaluate the current screening process.

The second reason this project is successful to such a degree is that a real labour shortage exists and has been identified by the industry as requiring trained staff which results in a demand driven project. A related third reason is that a participant enters the training program knowing, that all things being equal, a job will be available at the end of the training period. This suggests that the direction for future employment/training projects should be demand driven in concert with the private sector.

ISSUE 2

Did the Sobeys Training Project end/reduce the participant's dependence on social assistance?

Conclusion

Only one respondent reported social assistance as a primary source of income. Eleven respondents reported that they received less social assistance after the project than before. Survey data indicate that the monthly social assistance payment decreased $161.97 from $591.14 to $160.94. Therefore, the project did reduce dependence on social assistance.

Issue Focus

Another goal of employability enhancement projects is to enable participants to end their dependence on assistance. When evaluating the Sobeys project we considered not only whether participants were on assistance, but whether their reliance on assistance as a source of income had changed or shifted from one type of financial assistance (e.g. social assistance) to another (e.g. unemployment insurance).

Findings

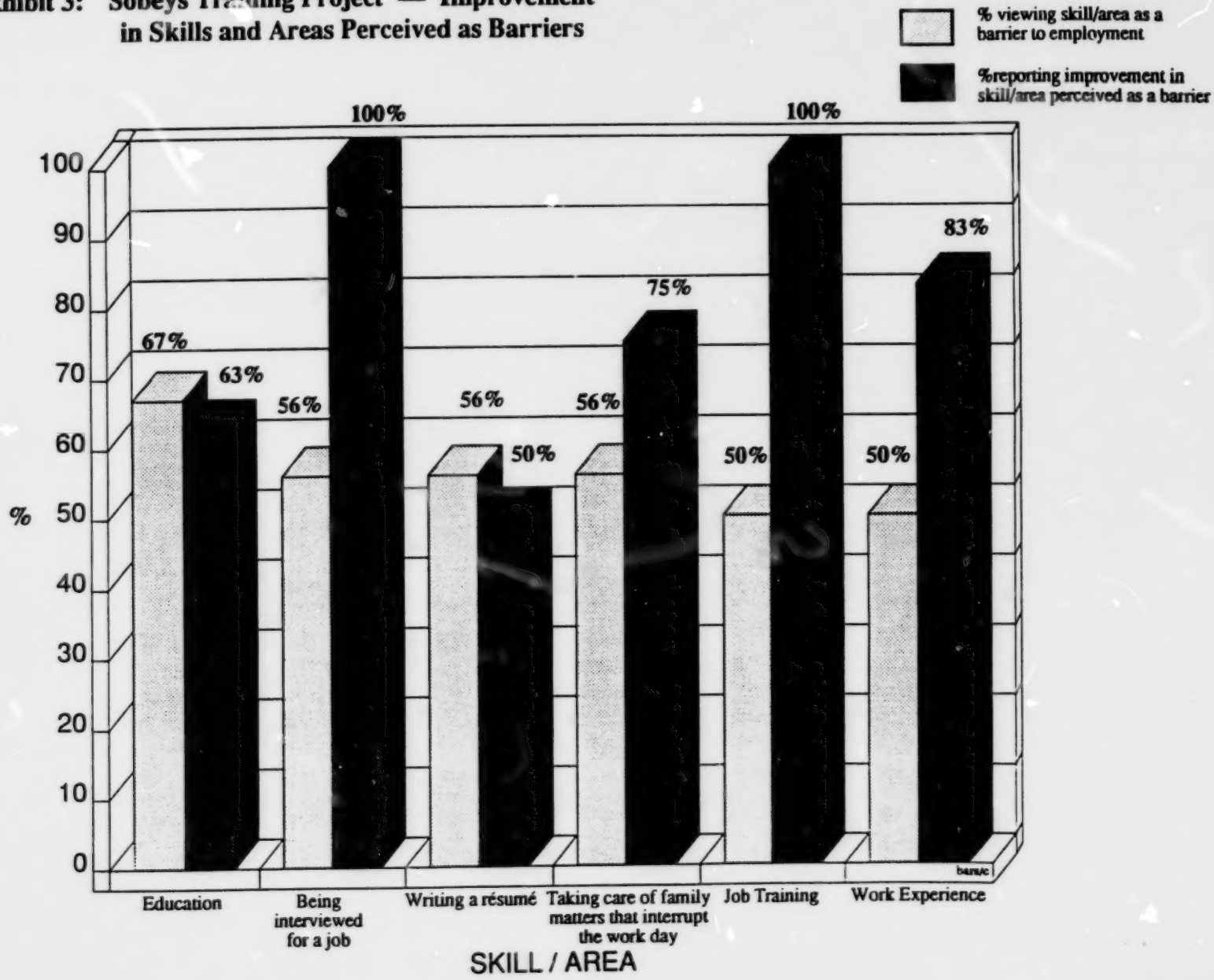
Did participants receive less social assistance after the program than before?

Information collected before intake allowed a comparison of circumstances before and after the project for 17 participants. In the six months before the project, all seventeen respondents reported receiving social assistance. Notably, eleven (65%) respondents reported that this amount was more (prior to the training project) than the amount of social assistance they were receiving at the time of the survey.

In addition, at the time of the survey only one respondent reported social assistance as his/her main source of income. Another ten (55.6%) respondents reported that their principal source of income was from wages.

Survey data indicate that the average pre-project social assistance payment was $591.14 per month and decreased to an average of $160.94 for a monthly reduction of $430.20. It is obvious that the Sobeys Training Project did reduce dependence on social assistance.

Exhibit 3: Sobeys Training Project — Improvement in Skills and Areas Perceived as Barriers



Level of assistance received by comparable population?

As discussed earlier, we were not aware of a comparable project in the Halifax area and as such could not address this question.

ISSUE 3

Did the Project strengthen the participant's sense of employment readiness?

Conclusion

The Sobeys Project resulted in a greatly improved sense of employment readiness for most participants. For skills perceived as barriers to employment the project was most successful in improving two specific skills: job training; and being interviewed for a job.

Issue Focus

This issue examines a fundamental concept of employment enhancement projects, that it is not sufficient to provide a client with skills, it is necessary to change the client's perceptions of his/her own employment readiness. Often, clients of employability enhancement projects have experienced a series of failures resulting in a negative self-image. We examined the areas perceived as barriers to employment by participants of the Sobeys Project and whether these same participants felt the project resulted in an improvement in these areas. We reasoned that perceived improvement in areas felt to be barriers to employment would result in an improved sense of employment readiness. Our rationale was that improvement would result in increased confidence in each areas and make the possibility of employment "real" for the participant, thereby enhancing his/her overall sense of employability.

Findings

Do participants say they feel more ready for employment after completing the program?

We addressed this issue by examining which areas were perceived as barriers to employment by participants and whether the project resulted in a perceived level of improvement for participants.

Our findings are outlined in Exhibit 3, on the opposite page. The bar chart presents the six main factors viewed by participants as a disadvantage or in a neutral light when looking for work. As well, the chart presents the percentage of these respondents who said the project was somewhat or very helpful in improving this skill or disposition.

Certain skills or aptitudes were perceived by 50% or more of the participants as barriers to employment. Of this number, half or more felt that the project was helpful in improving these skills or dispositions. In particular, all respondents who perceived being interviewed for a job and job training as barriers to employment felt that their

skills had improved. The six main areas identified by respondents as barriers were:

- education (67%);
- being interviewed for a job (56%);
- writing a resume (56%);
- taking care of family matters that interrupt the work day (56%);
- job training (50%); and
- work experience (50%).

It should be noted the majority of these respondents did not have to test these job skills in the labour market as they were made offers of employment immediately upon graduation from the project. In spite of this, when interviewed in-person, participants indicated that the training greatly increased their self-esteem, self-confidence and ability to perform in the workplace.

Understanding what areas are perceived as barriers to employment by participants is important not only to Sobeys Project management, but to others planning similar projects and those providing funding. This information is useful in evaluating what components of the project are more or less useful, and what elements are missing. The end result is that a project planned with this type of information will better meet the needs of its clients and make more effective use of the available financial and human resources, underscoring the need to collect this information on a continuous basis during the course of a project.

ISSUE 4

Did the Sobeys Training Project improve the participant's financial situation?

Conclusion

The Sobeys Training Project resulted in a perception of an improved financial situation for 13 participants In fact, the mean reported income at the time of the survey was $12,291 compared to $10,535 before the project. In addition, Sobeys offers employment that results in wages more than double the minimum wage after one year. Only three respondents reported a higher income than before the project which is linked to the "hidden" costs of unemployment (e.g. day care, transportation).

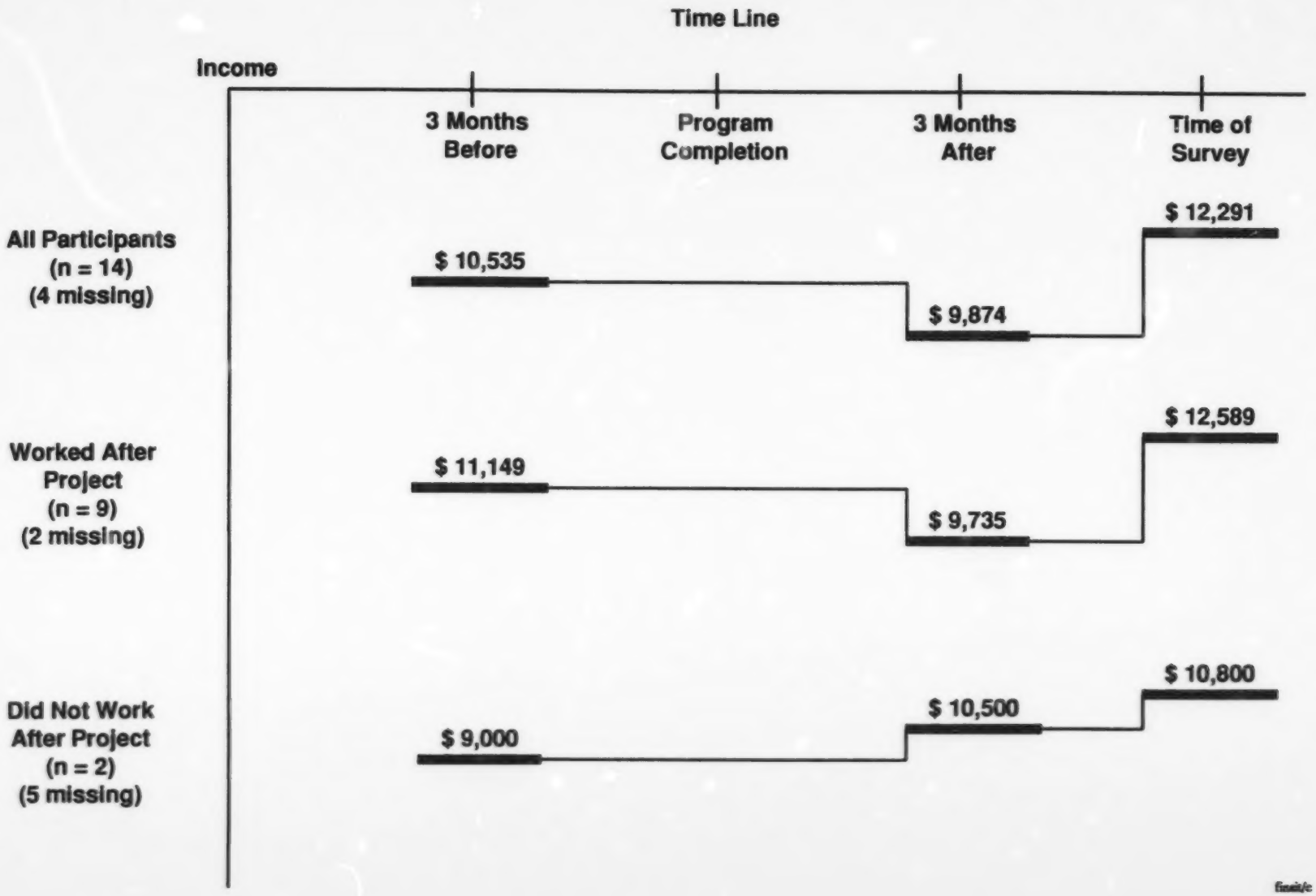
Issue Focus

This issue addresses another important question and attempts to measure whether real improvements in income have resulted. Indirectly, we also wanted to address the question of quality of life and to assess whether employment may result in disincentives for clients.

Findings

Do participants report any change in income?

Exhibit 4: Changes in the Financial Situation for Sobeys Training Project Participants



Using survey data, we examined income levels of project participants for three points in time:

- three months before the project;
- three months after the project (where applicable); and
- at the time of the survey.

Exhibit 4, on the opposite page, depicts the income levels reported for these three points in time. Income levels are based on available information and is presented for all participants, for participants who were employed at some point in time after the project, and for those who did not work after the Sobeys Training Project. Caution is merited when examining the information presented for those respondents who reported not having worked because of the high number of missing cases (n=5). Because two of these respondents reported an income of 0, we excluded them from the calculations.

An examination of the time line reveals that before the project, the mean annual income was $10,535. This figure dropped to $9,874 (a difference of $661) in the 3 months immediately after the project. However, at the time of the survey, the mean annual income rose to $12,291 for a difference of $1,756 from pre-project income levels, and a $2,417 difference from income levels in the three months immediately after the project.

These findings are in keeping with the fact that 13 (72%) respondents reported that they felt they were financially better off **at the time of the survey than in the three months before** the project. This is not surprising since most of these respondents were employed at Sobeys or elsewhere at the time of the survey. We also hypothesized that this positive perception is related to having wages as the primary source of income versus social assistance and the security of contributing to a pension and health plan.

However, when asked to compare **present** income with income **before** the project, only three respondents indicated a higher income. Again, this is not surprising as the indirect costs of employment (i.e. day care, clothing) reduce the amount of disposable income available to the participant. In addition, participants' bus passes were provided during the project, a cost which they had to assume when employed after the project. Although mean income was higher after the project, the additional costs related to employment may have resulted in this negative perception.

We also examined the income levels of participants who worked, and did not work, after the project. For those participants who were employed at some time after the project, the mean annual income was $11,149 and dropped slightly to $9,735 in the 3 months after the project. At the time of the survey, the mean level of income was $12,589 for a difference of $1,440 from pre-project income levels. Ten (91%) of these participants felt that they were financially better off at the time of the survey than in the three months before. We

attribute this reported difference in income to employment, since 9 (82%) respondents reported wages as their primary source of household income. We are confident that this improved level of income is attributable, at least in part, to employment obtained as a result of the Sobeys Training Project.

In contrast, only 3 of the 7 respondents who did not work after the project reported that they were financially better off at the time of the survey than before the project. Only one respondent reported wages as his/her primary source of income at the time of the survey. As indicated earlier, caution is warranted when examining income levels for this group in Exhibit 4 since the figures only represent 2 of 7 participants. What is notable is that the mean income level after the project (i.e. 10,800) is lower than for participants who worked after the training session.

An important issue related to income is the fact that employment with Sobeys results in wages above minimum wage ($4.50 above). As indicated earlier, graduates earn $6.06 an hour and by the end of their first year earn $8.73, nearly double minimum wage. In the longer-term, it is likely that the participant's income will be higher than before the project, a question project management may want to pursue in future follow-ups of participants.

The issue raised by these findings is that initially, at least, employment may result in a disincentive for participants due to costs such as transportation and day care. Often benefits (e.g. bus passes provided during the project, prescription drugs paid for) are terminated when employment begins. A transitional period may ease the financial burdens faced in the short-term by social assistance recipients who move to employment.

ISSUE 5

What were the costs of the program compared to social assistance?

Conclusion

The per capita cost of the Sobeys Training Project is $7,791.43. Reduced reliance on social assistance has resulted in a difference in monthly payments of $430.20. In the light of employment information available for participants, and the findings discussed for other issues we conclude that the savings are due to the improved employment of participants after the project.

Issue Focus

This issue is of central importance to program funders and administrators but is frequently overlooked during the planning process. In times of fiscal restraint it is those projects that can show a positive cost-benefit ratio that will have a competitive edge in applying for funding. Accordingly, when evaluating the Sobeys Training Project this issue was included for analysis.

The detailed calculations for this section are included in Appendix IV.

What is the total cost per participant of the Sobeys Training Project?

The cost per participant was calculated to be $7,791.43. In order to make this calculation we assumed an average of 14 participants per training session. This figure includes the training wages for participants for a period of 26 weeks at $5.50 an hour. Staff salaries, monitoring fees, rental of space and equipment and all other operation costs for the off-site training portion of the project are also included in this estimate, based on the information that the cost of off-site training is between $28,000 and $30,000 (an average of $29,000 was used). The per capita cost does not include any additional costs Sobeys Inc. incurred during the on-the-job training phase of this project. However, we assumed Sobeys did not incur any major expenses as a direct result of the project that the company would not have assumed for their own in-house training of new employees.

What is the cost of social assistance for each participant?

We relied on survey data to answer this question. Although self-reported data which requires recall of detailed information over a long period of time is not entirely reliable, this information was used in the absence of any data from Social Services used in other ERN evaluations.

Since Sobeys participants are all recipients of social assistance, in principle all 18 respondents should have reported that they were on social assistance in the six month period before the Training Project. However, only 17 of the participants surveyed reported they had received social assistance before the project compared to 6 after the project. Fourteen of the seventeen respondents reported the amount of social assistance received before the project. ERN evaluators decided, based on interviews with program staff to rely on the fact that all participants were social assistance recipients. All calculations were made with the assumption that all eighteen respondents received income assistance payments before the project.

We found that the amount of social assistance reported received by participants declined after participation in the Sobeys Training Project. The mean amount of social assistance reported received decreased from $591.14 per participant per month to $160.94 per month afterwards. This represents a savings of 430.20 per respondent per month or $5,162.40 for each respondent per year.

Number of weeks required to recover the cost of a Sobeys Training Project session from social assistance.

Once again, survey data was our source of information to answer this question. We computed the timeframe required to recoup the costs of a training project by determining how many months would be necessary to pay for a training session in

terms of savings in social assistance payments.

The best estimate of time required to capture the cost of a Sobeys training project (6 months induration) from social assistance savings is 9 months. This figure is based on the fact that each project is estimated to cost $109,080. One year of savings in terms of reduced social assistance payments amounts to $144,597. Therefore, under one year of social assistance savings (i.e. 9 months) offsets the cost of one Sobey's training project (6 months).

In terms of savings, this project achieves a break-even point rapidly in terms of recouping project costs through reductions in social assistance payments. Caution is advised when interpreting this figure, however. It is likely that the "payback" period is somewhat longer. Indeed, this evaluation did not have access to provincial, aggregate data as did other ERN evaluations. The estimate relies on the self-reported data of survey respondents and is subject to errors in recall. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the Training Project is "cost-wise" in terms of the costs of the project with respect to savings in social assistance payments.

ISSUE 6

What interventions contribute most to increasing employability?

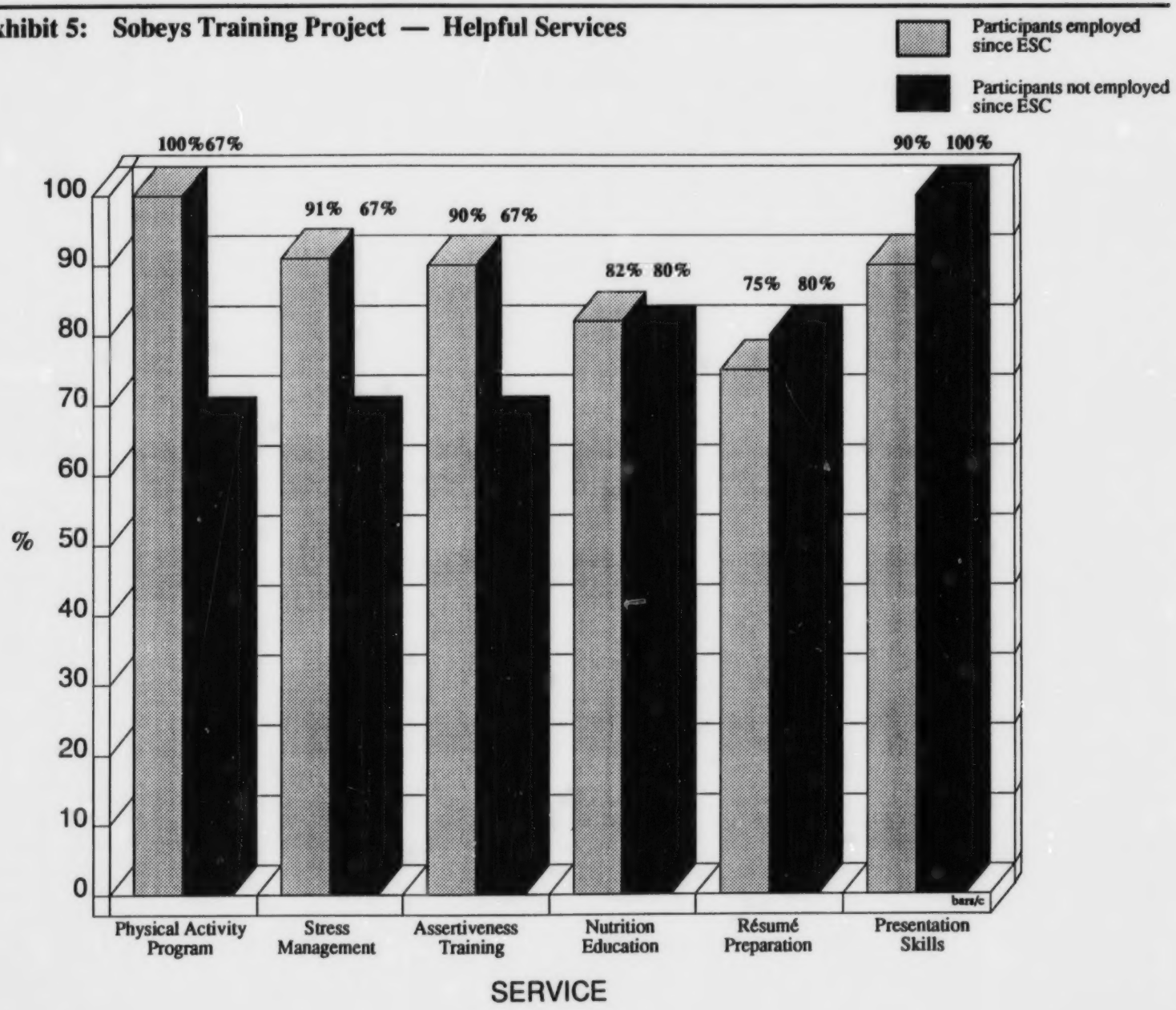
Conclusion

All elements which were a requirement of employment were viewed as helpful, not surprisingly, by most participants. With respect to more generic services, participants who were employed viewed the physical activity program and stress management as most helpful. Participants who were not employed listed presentation skills, resume preparation and nutrition education as most helpful. Smoking education and referral to academic upgrading were perceived as helpful by the smallest percentage of respondents.

Issue Focus

This issue is of vital importance, not only for Sobeys Project management, but for other individuals planning similar projects and for agencies providing funding. It is essential to identify interventions which are the most effective to ensure a maximum utilization of human and monetary resources. This type of information is necessary if projects will continue to improve and meet the needs of their clients and underscores the need to collect this information on a continuous basis.

Exhibit 5: Sobeys Training Project — Helpful Services



Findings

What elements of the project training skills do you use in your job?

The Sobeys Training Project was developed by professional outside trainers in concert with in-house Sobeys trainers. Consequently, the training elements (e.g. back care education, St. John's Ambulance, public presentation skills) were geared to the specific requirements of the three trades for which training was provided. Other training components form part of the Sobeys culture (e.g. healthy lifestyle including physical activity). It is obvious then that the training skills provided are directly related to employment at Sobeys.

What skills were helpful in finding a job?

This question does not directly apply to the Sobeys Training Project because successful graduates are offered employment with Sobeys. That being said, we determined which interventions were viewed as helpful by respondents to the telephone survey.

In order to answer this question, respondents were divided into two groups: respondents who were employed at the time of the survey or who had been employed at some time since the project; and those who had never been employed since the project. Exhibit 5, on the opposite page, presents the five main training areas which were not directly related to employment at Sobeys, perceived as most helpful by participants who were and were not employed at the time of the survey. The percentages reflect the responses of participants to whom the service was made available.

Of the three trades training areas, 100% found the meat cutting and deli clerk training helpful, with 71% reporting that the bakery training program was helpful. This latter percentage may be lower because the bakery component requires a midnight shift making it particularly difficult for single parents or those relying on public transportation. In addition, St. John's Ambulance training and back care education were viewed as helpful. Of elements that were more generic in nature, the physical activity program and stress management components were viewed as helpful by 100% and 92% of participants (respectively).

It is particularly significant that all those respondents who were not made offers of employment also perceived the trades training as being helpful. This suggests that these respondents learned skills that they can transfer to other employers in the food industry. Presentation skills were also cited by 100% of this group as being helpful which may be related to increased confidence in their ability to present themselves to potential employers. In addition, 80% reported that resumé preparation and nutrition education were helpful services.

Which experiences/training were less useful?

Interestingly, both groups identified two services as less helpful than the others: smoking education and referral to academic upgrading. Smoking education has been built into the off-site training program as such it may not be particularly relevant to a participant unless they have made the commitment to stop smoking. Participants may have viewed referrals to academic upgrading as less helpful because they were receiving training in areas (meat cutting, bakery and deli clerk training) that relate directly to employment whereas academic upgrading is less directly tied to immediate employment.

Qualitative Findings

Interviews were conducted with project participants and Sobeys management supervisory staff to obtain their perspective on the effectiveness of the project. The following discussion highlights the key findings relating to the strengths of the project and suggested areas for improvement.

Strengths of the Sobeys Training Project

One of the key elements of the Sobeys Project is the committed involvement demonstrated by the private sector (in this instance Sobeys Inc.) to employment training. The opportunity afforded the individual on social assistance is a real alternative and one that, with hard work and a demonstrated commitment, can lead to advancement and security within the company for the individual. This is especially pertinent in today's economy in the Atlantic region and offers the male participant, in particular, an opportunity for a trade when other such opportunities are in decline.

While the Sobeys Project is open to both men and women, the strength of the project for the male participant is that fewer training opportunities exist for males than females in general as evidenced by the greater availability of programs for the latter through the Canadian Jobs Strategy. At the same time, the Sobeys Project offers women entry into non-traditional trades areas.

From the perspective of the participants, another key strength of the project is that it provides trades training and the opportunity to make a career of that trade. Specifically, the Sobeys Project provides training in three areas; meat cutting, deli operations and bakery operations. One recent graduate of the Sobeys Training Project put it this way: "I had nothing before [the project] but now I've got something to shoot for. While meat cutting isn't classified as a trade, I view it as a trade and I'm not leaving. I've got a job and I classify myself as one of the luckiest people in Canada".

An equally important benefit to the participants is that the training and subsequent employment offer had a positive impact on their self-esteem. One woman stated that "It gave me back my self-esteem, it made me feel self-sufficient".

From the perspective of Sobeys management, a key strength and direct benefit of the training project has been the easing of labour shortages faced by the organization prior to the introduction of the training project. Of 38 participants trained through the project, Sobeys has hired 25 (66%) to fill shortages in the areas of their bakery, deli and meat cutting operations. An obvious benefit of the project to the Sobeys organization is the ability to train employees "in the Sobeys way" rather than hiring individuals trained generically from vocational school or by the competition who then require at least a three month period to "come up to speed" on the Sobeys premises.

A strength on the operational side of the Sobeys Training Project relates to the screening process devised for the program. Sobeys supervisory staff have found that the assessment tool and subsequent screening process developed and implemented by the referring sources (typically the Halifax City Employment Support Centre and Halifax County Employment Resources Centre, also SARS projects) are able to identify candidates well suited to the work requirements both in terms of suitability for the positions (physical characteristics and public presentation skills) and interest and commitment to the position. Sobeys management indicated they had experienced considerable problems identifying suitable candidates for previous training programs they had been involved with through various Canada Employment programs.

Indeed, Sobeys has had experiences with other programs such as hiring UIC recipients where 60% of wages are paid by Sobeys and 40% by the government. The personnel manager reported that turnover for this type of a project was high and that there was no training of UIC recipients involved (e.g. they bagged chickens, cleaned livers). Sobeys found that motivation was low among these participants who were required to take this employment. On the other hand, Sobeys Inc. experience with other projects has been more positive. The EIC Re-Entry program has been successful, mainly because participants are mature and committed to obtaining and maintaining employment. The personnel manager felt that the training project under evaluation in this report was successful from their point of view because:

- the lifeskills training offered by Lifestyles Management results in committed trainees;

- project management lend follow-up support (e.g. absenteeism) to staff personnel and "trouble shoot" with them;

- the project coordinator "forced" Sobeys to develop training modules, the absence of which was viewed as one of the reasons for the limited success of other projects; and

- the fact that the project is funded 100% by the government.

A second operational strength has been the cooperation shown by all staff and supervisory personnel involved directly or indirectly in the training project. Because the actual trades training experience takes place on the worksite during normal working hours, all staff involved in the specific trade participate in the training. Staff cooperation is a result of the strong information / educational component built into the training project in which store management are advised of the project and the associated benefits to the organization. In turn, they communicate the same information to their supervisory staff who bring the remaining employees on line. The result is that participants' training is not undermined by negative sentiments or misunderstandings on the part of staff, and training occurs in a supportive environment.

Areas for Improvement

Discussions held with Sobeys supervisory staff indicated a number of changes that they felt would strengthen the overall effectiveness of the training project. The first relates to incorporating a formalized, weekly or bi-weekly monitoring process through which the project manager could keep in regular contact with store personnel during the on-site training. The purpose of this monitoring would be to review each trainee's progress. The project manager agrees that this need exists but its development is limited by finances under the existing training budget.

Budgetary considerations have also precluded implementation of a system that provides counselling services or similar support to participants. The coordinator has found that a number of participants have required specialty services such as psychological or substance abuse counselling and, under the present system, has had no alternative but to terminate their involvement in the project. The preferred system like that available through the City and County SARS projects, would be to move a participant over from their training situation to a counselling service, with provision to move them back into training once the barrier to employment was removed.

A third suggestion for strengthening the project and in particular the participants' "employability" relates to the employee and sick time. A number of Sobeys supervisory staff indicated that during the on-site training, participants "abused" the monthly sick day accorded all participants in a government funded training project. Staff indicate that participants should be made aware that employees in the private sector do not

Exhibit 6: Evaluation Issues and Conclusions

	Issues	Conclusions Suggested by the Evaluation
1.	Did the Program assist the participants in obtaining employment; or maintaining employment?	Yes, 66% were employed at Sobeys. Another 13% found employment outside the organization. Two thirds were employed from 6 to 18 months and 76% continued in their first job.
2.	Did the Program end or reduce social assistance?	Yes, the program reduced dependence on social assistance. The monthly social assistance payment decreased from $591.14 to $160.94 after the project for a difference of $460.20.
3.	Did the Program strengthen the participants' personal sense of employment readiness?	Yes
4.	Did the Program improve the participants' financial situation?	Yes, mean income after the project was $12,291 compared to $10,535 before Thirteen respondents reported that they felt financially better off at the time of the survey than before the project.
5.	What were the costs of the Program compared to social assistance?	The per capita costs of each session is estimated to be 7,791.43. In addition, 9 months of social assistance savings offset the cost of one training session (6 months).
6.	What interventions contributed most to increasing employability?	In addition to training which met requirements for employment, employed participants view the physical activity program and stress management as helpful. Unemployed participants listed presentation skills, resumé preparation and nutrition education as most helpful.

have this automatic "free" day and recommended that the inclusion of this benefit be re-thought by project management.

Finally, staff felt that a greater emphasis on assertiveness training and self-esteem should be included in the classroom segment of the training.

Sobeys Inc. views the fact that the project is completely funded by the federal government as a positive factor. However, they may want to consider the value added of channelling a proportion of existing training dollars into this type of project. Sobeys Inc. has made a strong commitment to this training project.

Summary of Observations

The following section summarizes observations made during the course of the evaluation. Exhibit 6, on the opposite page, summarizes our conclusions with respect to the six evaluation issues, based on our qualitative and quantitative findings.

1. The Sobeys Training Project was successful in training and placing 66% of participants in positions of employment within the organization. Another 13% found employment outside Sobeys, two in the retail food industry. Further, 76% continued in their first job, with two thirds employed for a period ranging from 6 to 18 months indicating a stabilization in the employment pattern of participants.

2. The project did result in reduced dependence on social assistance. The reduction in monthly payments was $430.20 after the project.

3. Participants' sense of employment readiness were strengthened as a result of the Training Project.

4. Thirteen of 18 respondents reported feeling their financial situation had improved. The mean reported income at the time of the survey was $12,291 compared to $10,535 before the project. Mean income dropped slightly to $9,874 in the 3 months after the Sobeys Training Project.

5. Stress management and the physical activity program were viewed as helpful by employed participants. In contrast, participants who were not employed listed presentation skills, resume preparation and nutrition education as most helpful. Smoking education and referral to academic upgrading were viewed as least helpful by all participants.

6. The Sobeys Training Project is a real training opportunity for males in particular, since fewer opportunities exist for males than females in the area of employability enhancement projects.

7. The strength of the project is that it is demand driven and enables Sobeys

to train employees in their tradition and ease their own labour shortages.

8. The screening process in place has proven more effective in selecting suitable candidates than previous projects Sobeys has been associated with in the past.

9. A strength of the project is the information/educational component for all staff and supervisory personnel. The component ensures training occurs in a supportive environment.

10. There is a need for a formal and regular monitoring process to review each trainee's progress. The existing training budget does not allow for this component.

11. Budgetary constraints have also precluded implementation of a system that provides counselling services or similar support to participants. At present, participants who face difficulties have no alternative but to end their involvement with the project.

12. The monthly sick day is "abused" by participants and does not reflect actual working conditions in the private sector.

13. Finally, a greater need for assertiveness and self-esteem training has been identified for the classroom training segment of the project.

5.
RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of our evaluation, we make the following recommendations for future training projects. We recognize that some of these suggestions are beyond the control of project management. However, consideration should be given to include these recommendations in future proposals to broaden the project's mandate and request additional funding. These recommendations are not intended as criticisms, they are simply suggestions for enhancing the project.

Federal/Provincial Governments

1. The SARS program should continue to encourage private sector participation in the identification, establishment and implementation of training programs. This recommendation is based on the high success rate (79% of participants placed in ongoing employment) of the Sobeys Training Project. In areas facing high unemployment rates, in particular, it is the private sector that is in the best position to identify labour shortages and therefore real employment opportunities.

2. In future private sector training projects, the process whereby training components are developed jointly by professional outside trainers and in-house trainers specific to the industry, should be encouraged. This recommendation is based on the fact that the training meets the needs of the employer and is transferable to other employers in the same industry.

Project Designers/Project Management

3. Future private sector training projects should include an adequate budget to allow for appropriate monitoring of trainees while training on-site. This information is not collected at present and would be useful to project management to undertake longer-term follow-up directed at planning. In the short-term, it would enable project management to address problems that certain participants may be having immediately rather than resulting in the termination of training.

4. In addition, provision should be made for counselling or similar support for participants of private sector training projects. That is, if a participant while on training is identified in need of counselling, provisions should be made for transition to counselling and back to training once the barrier is addressed. At present, this service is not available and participants facing

difficulties that may be quickly addressed have no choice but to leave the project.

Specifically for this Project

5. More emphasis on assertiveness training and building self-esteem should be built into the classroom training component. This recommendation is based on observations made by Sobeys supervisory staff of the trainees interacting on-site with customers and Sobeys management. This training would result in better customer relation skills for trainees, and therefore improve their job performance.

6. For future training projects, the automatic sick day per month should be excluded. Project management reported that this privilege is "abused" by participants. This recommendation is made to bring the training environment in line with the employment environment.

7. Four participants' involvement with the project was terminated as a result of "attitude problems". Careful consideration should be given to the reasons why these participants were unable to complete the project. In particular, we recommend that project management and Sobeys Inc. examine the screening process which is currently in place to determine whether additional criteria would result in a more effective selection of candidates. This process, if implemented on a regular basis, will continue to refine the selection criteria and ensure selection of candidates with a high potential for success.

6.
CONCLUSION

Participants and Sobeys Project management alike see the Sobeys Training Project as offering a real alternative to social assistance recipients with a high number of participants. Further, one to two years after the first two training intakes, graduates continue in their first job.

The evaluation ties the success of the Sobeys Training Project to the fact that it is employer driven - that is, specific labour shortages were identified by the private sector and training was developed around these shortages. Through the private sector model, participants are trained for existing positions and therefore have a stake in committing themselves to the training. This is particularly relevant when it is realized that training wages do not always cover the real costs incurred by the trainee after daycare, clothing and transportation costs. This model encourages participants to complete the training requirements because a real opportunity for employment exists, providing future security and enhanced self-esteem. The model is stronger than supply driven models which do not necessarily provide training which will result in employment, although they may lead to enhanced employability.

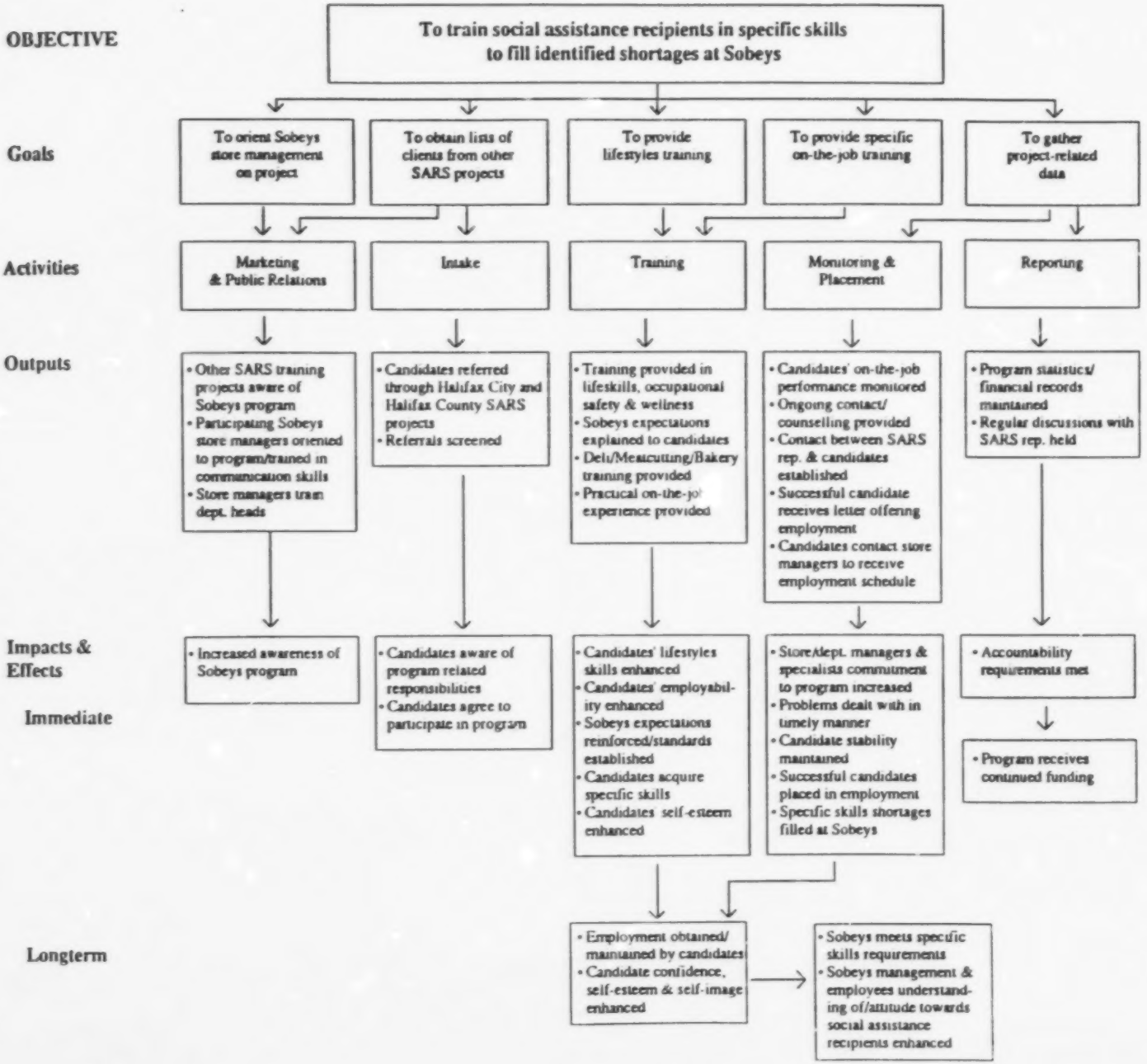
The evaluation has found that the Sobeys Training Project has/will significantly enhance the financial situation of at least 66% of its participants. This 66% represents the 25 participants who accepted offers of employment with Sobeys. The project offers the stability of permanent employment within two years, acquisition of a trade, advancement within the organization, a pension plan and complete health benefits package. In addition, Sobeys offers employment that results in wages more than double the minimum wage after one year.

In general, the Sobeys Training Project located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and directed at social assistance recipients has provided an excellent opportunity with which to evaluate the operations of a private sector employability enhancement project. This type of private sector training model, should in our opinion, be encouraged by funders as an alternative to more traditional employability enhancement projects.

APPENDIX I

PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL

EXHIBIT I: SOBEYS PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL


OBJECTIVE
To train social assistance recipients in specific skills to fill identified shortages at Sobeys
Goals
To orient Sobeys store management on project
To obtain lists of clients from other SARS projects
To provide lifestyles training
To provide specific on-the-job training
To gather project-related data
Activities
Marketing & Public Relations
Intake
Training
Monitoring & Placement
Reporting
Outputs
• Other SARS training projects aware of Sobeys program
• Participating Sobeys store managers oriented to program/trained in communication skills
• Store managers train dept. heads
• Candidates referred through Halifax City and Halifax County SARS projects
• Referrals screened
• Training provided in lifeskills, occupational safety & wellness
• Sobeys expectations explained to candidates
• Deli/Meatcutting/Bakery training provided
• Practical on-the-job experience provided
• Candidates' on-the-job performance monitored
• Ongoing contact/ counselling provided
• Contact between SARS rep. & candidates established
• Successful candidate receives letter offering employment
• Candidates contact store managers to receive employment schedule
• Program statistics/ financial records maintained
• Regular discussions with SARS rep. held
Impacts & Effects
Immediate
• Increased awareness of Sobeys program
• Candidates aware of program related responsibilities
• Candidates agree to participate in program
• Candidates' lifestyles skills enhanced
• Candidates' employability enhanced
• Sobeys expectations reinforced/standards established
• Candidates acquire specific skills
• Candidates self-esteem enhanced
• Store/dept. managers & specialists commitment to program increased
• Problems dealt with in timely manner
• Candidate stability maintained
• Successful candidates placed in employment
• Specific skills shortages filled at Sobeys
• Accountability requirements met
• Program receives continued funding
Longterm
• Employment obtained/ maintained by candidates
• Candidate confidence, self-esteem & self-image enhanced
• Sobeys meets specific skills requirements
• Sobeys management & employees understanding of/attitude towards social assistance recipients enhanced

APPENDIX II

METHODOLOGY OUTLINE

EXHIBIT 2: METHODOLOGY OUTLINE

The Sobeys Project

IMPACT / EFFECT ISSUES	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	AVAILABLE DATA / QUALITY	ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENTS REQUIRED
1. Did the Project assist the participants in: – obtaining employment; – maintaining employment	R1. How many participants subsequently found work?	• Number of participants working 6 months after completing the program.	• The project does not record information regarding participants.	• Survey of participants.
	R2. How many successful participants maintained employment?	• Number of jobs held over six months.		• Survey of participants.
		• Proportion of the 6 months following the program during which participants were employed.		• Survey of participants.
	R3. Is there a change in employment pattern for successful participants?	• % of six months spent working.		• Survey of participants.
		• Length of employment in the 6 months following the program compared to the 6 months preceding the program.		• Survey of participants.
	R4. Is the program success rate higher than in a comparable group?	• Success rate by entrance.		• Survey of participants. • Survey of comparison group.

The Sobeys Project

IMPACT / EFFECT ISSUES	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	AVAILABLE DATA / QUALITY	ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENTS REQUIRED
2. Did the Project end/reduce the participants' dependence on social assistance?	R5. Did participants receive less social assistance after the program than before?	• Amount of social assistance received in the 6 months before taking the program compared to the amount received in the 6 months after taking the program.		• Survey of participants.
		• Differences between successful and unsuccessful participants.		• Interviews with staff.
	R6. Level of assistance received by comparable population?	• Assistance received.		• Survey of comparison group.
3. Did the Project strengthen the participants' personal sense of employment readiness?	R7. Do participants say they feel more ready for employment after completing the program?	• Individuals' perceptions regarding obtaining and keeping a job as a result of the program.		• Survey of participants.
4. Did the Project improve the participants' financial situation?	R8. Do participants report any change in income?	• Participants' perceptions / actual financial status in the 6 months following the program.	• Review of the social assistance and family benefit files.	• Survey of participants.

The Sobeys Project

COST / BENEFIT ISSUES	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	AVAILABLE DATA / QUALITY	ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENTS REQUIRED
5. What were the costs of the program compared to social assistance.			• It will be difficult to show an accurate per client cost as there is no set time for clients' involvement with the project. Overall costs can be calculated and an estimate per province provided. (L)	
	R9. What is the total incremental cost per participant?	• Capitation + CD&E administration cost + Social Services administration cost. • Cost per success = (per capita cost * number of participants) / number of successes.		
	R10. What is the cost of social assistance for each participant?	• Average weekly cost per social assistance recipient in Nova Scotia. • Average weekly cost for social assistance recipients with the same characteristics as actual participants.	• Provincial Community Services. (H)	
	R11. What is the cost of social assistance for each successful participant?	• Average weekly social assistance cost for successful participants in the 25 weeks following the program.	• Provincial Community Services. (H)	

The Sobeys Project

COST / BENEFIT ISSUES	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	INDICATORS	AVAILABLE DATA / QUALITY	ADDITIONAL INSTRUMENTS REQUIRED
	R12. Number of weeks required to recover the cost of a session from social assistance savings.	• (Per capita cost * average number of participants per session) / (Weekly social assistance savings per success * average number of successes per session).	• Provincial Community Services. (L)	
6. What interventions contribute most to increasing employability?	R13. What elements of the project training skills you learned do you use in your job?	• Staff and participant perceptions.	• No data available.	• Survey of participants. • Interviews with staff. • Focus group.
	R14. Which skills were helpful in finding a job?	• Same as above.	• No data available.	• Same as above.
	R15. Which expenses / training were less useful?	• Same as above.	• No data available.	• Same as above.

APPENDIX III

TELEPHONE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

APPENDIX III

TELEPHONE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SOBEYS PERSONNEL

1. What do you see as the purpose of the Sobeys Project?

2. To what extent has the Project met the labour shortages identified by Sobeys?

3. Do you see the Sobeys Project as offering a real alternative to social assistance recipients? Please explain.

4. In general, how satisfied are you with the quality of the work performed by trainees who have gone through the Sobeys Projet?

5. In general, how satisfied are you with the lifeskills of the Sobeys Project trainees?

6. Can you identify any additional areas of classroom training that should be offered the trainees in the classroom component?

7. Is the timeframe for each of the two training components (lifeskills and on-the-job) sufficient?

8. When problems are identified at the workplace with the participant, what process is there for dealing effectively with those problems? Is the existing process sufficient?

9. What kind of ongoing support is provided to the participant while involved in the Sobeys Project? What should be provided by way of ongoing support?

10. What are the three key strengths of the Sobeys Project? Please explain.

11. Does the Sobeys Project have any weaknesses? If so, can these be changed and how?

12. Do you have any other comments on the Sobeys Project and how it operates?

EMPLOYABILITY RESOURCES NETWORK

Report on the Evaluation Study of the Sobeys Training Project

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

November, 1990

Halifax Sobeys Participants

	n	%
Marital status		
Single	6	35
Married	6	35
Separated	1	6
Divorced	4	24
Total	17	100
Sex		
Male	9	53
Female	8	47
Total	17	100
Age of participant		
18 - 29	5	29
30 - 39	7	41
40 - 49	4	24
50 or over	1	6
Total	17	100
Number of children living at home		
None	7	44
One	3	19
Two	5	31
Three	1	6
Total	16	100

Halifax Sobeys Participants

	n	%
Ages of children		
Under 6	6	67
6 -12	6	67
Over 12	4	44
Total	9	100
Highest level of education completed		
Some high school	11	65
High school	5	29
Some university	1	6
Total	17	100
Main means of transportation		
Public transit	11	65
Own car	5	29
Someone else's car	1	6
Total	17	100
Canadian citizen		
Yes	17	100
Total	17	100

Halifax Sobeys Survey

	n	%
Amount monthly financial asst. before program		
79	1	11
350	2	22
407	1	11
432	1	11
450	1	11
700	1	11
750	1	11
800	1	11
Total	9	100
Receiving SA 6 months before program		
Yes	17	100
Total	17	100

Halifax Sobeys Survey

	n	%
Amount of SA 6 months before program		
79	1	11
257	1	11
350	2	22
407	1	11
450	1	11
700	1	11
750	1	11
800	1	11
Total	9	100
SA before compared to amount received now		
More	11	65
Less	6	35
Total	17	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 1	n	%
Month when last job started		
February	1	11
March	1	11
June	2	22
September	2	22
October	2	22
November	1	11
Total	9	100
Year when last job started		
1980 - 1985	3	17
1986	6	33
1988	5	28
1989	4	22
Total	18	100
Month when last job ended		
February	2	20
May	1	10
June	2	20
July	2	20
September	1	10
November	1	10
December	1	10
Total	10	100
Year when last job ended		
1980 - 1985	1	6
1986	1	6
1987	4	22
1988	5	28
1989	7	39
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Questions 2 to 5	n	%
Status at last job		
Full time	9	50
Part time	6	33
Seasonal	3	17
Total	18	100
Reason for job termination		
Laid off	5	28
Term, seasonal or contract job	3	17
Company sold or out of business	1	6
Health, accident	2	11
Pregnant	1	6
Problems with supervisor or co-workers	3	17
Wanted better job	2	11
Transportation problems	1	6
Other	2	11
Total	18	100
Looked for other jobs before program		
Yes	10	56
No	8	44
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Questions 6 and 7	n	%
Type of job sought		
Anything	4	40
Blue collar labourer eg. warehouse	2	20
Waiter, cook	1	10
Trained blue collar eg. construction, carpenter	1	10
Office work, clerical	1	10
Health care related	1	10
Total	10	100
Education		
Major disadvantage	3	17
Somewhat of a disadvantage	6	33
Neutral	3	17
Somewhat of an advantage	5	28
Major advantage	1	6
Total	18	100
Being interviewed for a job		
Somewhat of a disadvantage	2	11
Neutral	8	44
Somewhat of an advantage	5	28
Major advantage	3	17
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 7	n	%
Writing a resume		
Major disadvantage	6	33
Somewhat of a disadvantage	2	11
Neutral	2	11
Somewhat of an advantage	3	17
Major advantage	5	28
Total	18	100
Completing a job application		
Somewhat of a disadvantage	3	17
Neutral	3	17
Somewhat of an advantage	5	28
Major advantage	7	39
Total	18	100
Work experience		
Somewhat of a disadvantage	4	22
Neutral	5	28
Somewhat of an advantage	3	17
Major advantage	6	33
Total	18	100
Job training		
Major disadvantage	2	11
Somewhat of a disadvantage	3	17
Neutral	4	22
Somewhat of an advantage	7	39
Major advantage	2	11
Total	18	100
Taking care of family matters		
Major disadvantage	1	6
Somewhat of a disadvantage	7	39
Neutral	2	11
Somewhat of an advantage	1	6
Major advantage	7	39
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 7	n	%
Confidence in ability to work		
Somewhat of a disadvantage	2	11
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat of an advantage	6	33
Major advantage	9	50
Total	18	100
Working together with others		
Somewhat of a disadvantage	1	6
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat of an advantage	6	33
Major advantage	10	56
Total	18	100
Taking direction from your supervisor		
Somewhat of a disadvantage	1	6
Neutral	2	11
Somewhat of an advantage	4	22
Major advantage	11	61
Total	18	100
Ability to be on time		
Somewhat of an advantage	9	50
Major advantage	9	50
Total	18	100
Ability to go to work regularly		
Neutral	2	11
Somewhat of an advantage	7	39
Major advantage	9	50
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 7	n	%
Dressing appropriately for the job		
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat of an advantage	4	22
Major advantage	13	72
Total	18	100
Health		
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat of an advantage	4	22
Major advantage	13	72
Total	18	100
Generally feeling fit		
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat of an advantage	6	33
Major advantage	11	61
Total	18	100
Negative factors when looking for jobs		
Transportation, distance	5	50
Lack of experience, training	1	10
Overqualified or no jobs in desired field	3	30
Age	1	10
Total	10	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 8 and 9	n	%
Currently employed		
Yes	11	61
No	7	39
Total	18	100
Employed at any time since program		
No	7	100
Total	7	100
Number of jobs held since program		
1 job	10	91
2 jobs	1	9
Total	11	100
How first job was found		
Program referral	2	18
EIC	1	9
Newspaper	1	9
Friend	1	9
Other	1	9
Social services	5	45
Total	11	100
How second job was found		
Friend	1	100
Total	1	100
Status at first job		
Full time	4	36
Part time	7	64
Total	11	100
Status at second job		
Full time	1	100
Total	1	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 9	n	%
Hours worked at first job		
21 - 30 hours	4	36
31 - 39 hours	2	18
40 hours	4	36
Over 40 hours	1	9
Total	11	100
Hours worked at second job		
40 hours	1	100
Total	1	100
Wage at first job		
Under $5.00	1	10
$6.01 to $8.00	5	50
Over $8.00	4	40
Total	10	100
Wage at second job		
Over $8.00	1	100
Total	1	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 9	n	%
Months at first job		
2 months or less	2	18
3 - 4 months	1	9
5 - 6 months	2	18
7 - 12 months	4	36
Over 12 months	2	18
Total	11	100
Months at second job		
5 - 6 months	1	100
Total	1	100
Reason first job ended		
Term position or job ended	1	50
Pay too low	1	50
Total	2	100
Reason second job ended		
	0	0
Total	0	0

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 10	n	%
St. John's ambulance training		
Not very helpful	3	17
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat helpful	3	17
Very helpful	10	56
Not applicable	1	6
Total	18	100
Stress management		
Neutral	3	17
Somewhat helpful	7	39
Very helpful	7	39
Not applicable	1	6
Total	18	100
Nutrition education		
Neutral	3	17
Somewhat helpful	4	22
Very helpful	9	50
Not applicable	2	11
Total	18	100
Physical Activity Program		
Neutral	2	11
Somewhat helpful	5	28
Very helpful	10	56
Not applicable	1	6
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 10	n	%
Back care education		
Somewhat helpful	1	6
Very helpful	16	89
Not applicable	1	6
Total	18	100
Smoking education		
Not at all helpful	7	39
Not very helpful	2	11
Neutral	1	6
Very helpful	5	28
Not applicable	3	17
Total	18	100
Assertiveness training		
Neutral	3	17
Somewhat helpful	3	17
Very helpful	10	56
Not applicable	2	11
Total	18	100
Resume preparation		
Not at all helpful	1	6
Not very helpful	2	11
Somewhat helpful	3	17
Very helpful	7	39
Not applicable	5	28
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 10	n	%
Presentation skills		
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat helpful	6	33
Very helpful	8	44
Not applicable	3	17
Total	18	100
Referral to academic upgrading		
Not very helpful	2	11
Neutral	3	17
Somewhat helpful	1	6
Very helpful	1	6
Not applicable	11	61
Total	18	100
Bakery training program		
Not at all helpful	1	6
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat helpful	2	11
Very helpful	7	39
Not applicable	7	39
Total	18	100
Meat cutter training		
Somewhat helpful	1	6
Very helpful	4	22
Not applicable	13	72
Total	18	100
Deli clerk training program		
Somewhat helpful	1	6
Very helpful	2	11
Not applicable	15	83
Total	18	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 11	n	%
ESC - Building confidence		
Neutral	3	19
Somewhat helpful	4	25
Very helpful	9	56
Total	16	100
ESC - Writing a resume		
Not at all helpful	1	8
Not very helpful	1	8
Neutral	2	17
Somewhat helpful	3	25
Very helpful	5	42
Total	12	100
ESC - Completing a job application		
Not at all helpful	2	17
Not very helpful	1	8
Neutral	1	8
Somewhat helpful	2	17
Very helpful	6	50
Total	12	100
ESC - Handling an interview		
Not at all helpful	1	7
Somewhat helpful	6	40
Very helpful	8	53
Total	15	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 11	n	%
ESC - Work experience		
Neutral	2	13
Somewhat helpful	1	7
Very helpful	12	80
Total	15	100
ESC - Job training		
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat helpful	1	6
Very helpful	14	88
Total	16	100
ESC - Education		
Not very helpful	2	22
Neutral	1	11
Somewhat helpful	2	22
Very helpful	4	44
Total	9	100
ESC - Getting a job		
Not at all helpful	1	6
Neutral	1	6
Somewhat helpful	3	19
Very helpful	11	69
Total	16	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 11	n	%
ESC - Confidence in ability to work		
Not very helpful	2	13
Somewhat helpful	4	25
Very helpful	10	63
Total	16	100
ESC - Working together with others		
Somewhat helpful	1	8
Very helpful	12	92
Total	13	100
ESC - Dressing appropriately		
Neutral	1	8
Somewhat helpful	2	17
Very helpful	9	75
Total	12	100
ESC - Ability to be on time		
Somewhat helpful	2	18
Very helpful	9	82
Total	11	100
ESC - Ability to go to work regularly		
Neutral	1	9
Somewhat helpful	1	9
Very helpful	9	82
Total	11	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 11	n	%
ESC - Taking direction from supervisor		
Neutral	1	8
Somewhat helpful	2	15
Very helpful	10	77
Total	13	100
ESC - Taking care of family matters		
Not at all helpful	1	8
Not very helpful	1	8
Neutral	1	8
Somewhat helpful	1	8
Very helpful	9	69
Total	13	100
ESC - Health		
Neutral	1	8
Somewhat helpful	2	15
Very helpful	10	77
Total	13	100
ESC - Generally feeling fit		
Neutral	1	7
Somewhat helpful	4	29
Very helpful	9	64
Total	14	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 12 to 13	n	%
Currently a sole support parent		
Yes	6	33
No	12	67
Total	18	100
Years as a sole support parent		
2 years	1	17
3 - 4 years	1	17
5 - 10 years	1	17
Over 10 years	3	50
Total	6	100
Member of community organizations		
Yes	5	28
No	13	72
Total	18	100
Organization or activity participated in		
Sports related organizations	1	25
Health related charities	1	25
Support groups	1	25
Housing co-operative	2	50
Total	4	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 13 to 14	n	%
Hours per week in outside activities		
1 - 2 hours	2	40
3 - 4 hours	1	20
5 - 9 hours	1	20
10 hours or more	1	20
Total	5	100
Outside activities good way to find jobs		
Yes	3	60
No	2	40
Total	5	100
Primary source of household income		
Job	10	56
Parents	1	6
Spouse	2	11
Income assistance	1	6
None	1	6
Other	1	6
Savings	2	11
Total	18	100
Total monthly household income		
$500 or less	1	7
$501 - $750	2	13
$751 - $1000	5	33
$1001 - $1500	3	20
$1501 - $2000	1	7
Over $2000	3	20
Total	15	100
Total personal monthly income		
No personal income	2	13
$501 - $750	3	19
$751 - $1000	6	38
$1001 - $1500	4	25
$1501 - $2000	1	6
Total	16	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 14 to 15	n	%
Personal income from working		
None	2	14
$501 - $750	4	29
$751 - $1000	4	29
$1001 - $1500	3	21
$1501 - $2000	1	7
Total	14	100
Personal income from UI		
None	15	100
Total	15	100
Personal income from social assistance		
None	14	88
$1 - $500	1	6
$501 - $750	1	6
Total	16	100
Personal income from other sources		
None	14	82
$1 - $500	2	12
$751 - $1000	1	6
Total	17	100
Completed program		
Yes	15	83
No	3	17
Total	18	100
Been out of program more than 3 months		
Yes	9	60
No	6	40
Total	15	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 16 to 18	n	%
Income 3 months after program compared to now		
More	1	11
Less	8	89
Total	9	100
Difference between 3 months after and now		
Over $250 less	5	63
$1 - $250 less	2	25
Over $250 more	1	13
Total	8	100
Social assistance 3 months after program		
Yes	6	38
No	10	63
Total	16	100
SA per month 3 months after		
$200 or less	2	33
$201 - $400	2	33
Over $600	2	33
Total	6	100
SA 3 months after compared to now		
	0	0
Total	0	0
Financially better off now than 3 months after		
Yes	6	67
No	3	33
Total	9	100

Halifax Participant Survey

Question 19 to 21	n	%
Income 3 months before program compared to now		
More	2	22
Less	6	67
Same	1	11
Total	9	100
Difference between 3 months before and now		
Over $250 less	4	57
No difference	1	14
Over $250 more	2	29
Total	7	100
Social assistance 3 months before program		
Yes	17	94
No	1	6
Total	18	100
SA per month 3 months before		
Under $400	3	21
$400 to $599	2	14
$600 to $799	6	43
$800 to $999	3	21
Total	14	100
Financially better off now than 3 months before		
Yes	13	72
No	5	28
Total	18	100